Some Remarkable Women

A BOOK FOR YOUNG LADIES.

DANIEL WISE, D. D.

CRANSTON & STOWE

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SOME REMARKABLE WOMEN.

A Book for Young Ladies.

BY

DANIEL WISE, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF "MEN OF RENOWN," "LIFE OF CARVOSSO," "STORY OF A WONDERFUL LIFE," ETC.

"To teach us how divine a thing
A woman may be made."—WORDSWORTH.

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Introductory Words to Young Women.

AS a traveler on reaching the summit of a hill casts an inquiring eye upon the landscape which lies beyond, so does every serious-minded young lady when she reaches the confines of coming womanhood occasionally cast away a measure of the lightsome thoughtlessness of her early girlhood, and strive to look with curious eye upon her future life. It matters not that every thing before her is shrouded in mist, that the only thing certain in the part she is to take in the grand drama of her earthly existence is its uncertainty. Yet the impulses of her aspiring young soul force to her quivering lips the question, What is to be *my* lot in life?

To this very natural and by no means unfitting inquiry there comes no voice nor sound from behind the all-enshrouding, impenetrable mist. Then, if her

nature be timid and anxious, she may direct her thoughts to what she knows of those who move within and about her present social circle. She calls up images of some women who, by taking ill-advised steps, have spoiled their lives; of others who, bereft of parents and near relatives, have been thrown unprepared upon their own resources, and have found their lives to be a toilsome struggle for bread; of still others who, though outwardly prosperous and living in gayety and fashion, she knows are empty-hearted and miserable. These unhappy women float before her vision like figures of evil omen, and she shudders lest it should be her destiny to share a fate more or less similar to theirs.

To affirm that there is nothing in the uncertainties of life to awaken serious thoughtfulness in young women, would be to make a false and misleading statement. It would be equally wide from the truth to teach that their unavoidable perils are such as to justify brooding and painful anxiety. In this age, the respect paid to woman and the opportunities offered her for free self-development, leave little room for her to dread any grave dangers except such as she may call into existence by her own self-will, and by her own obstinate refusal to be guided by the wisdom of her parents and the precepts of

Him who is the only infallible Teacher. In the tenderness of his unfathomable love, he is ever whispering in her heart, would she but listen for his voice, and saying to her when she is longing for direction, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?" Self-surrendered to his guidance, she has nothing to fear. His watchful providence will guard her interests. His peace will make her life worth living, be its outward condition what it may. But if she will be her own counselor, will walk in the light of her own imagined wisdom, and will be governed by her own blind impulses, she will surely find the roses of her own fancies to be begirt with thorns that will pierce not her hands only, but also her heart, with deadly wounds. Therefore, so far as her happiness and general well-being are concerned, her destiny is largely in her own hands.

The character sketches in this volume are illustrations of these truths. The women portrayed moved amidst very varied circumstances. Some, like Miss Adams and the Bronté sisters, were largely left to depend for their support and enjoyments on their own resources; others, like Sister Dora, Miss Havergal, and the Grimke sisters, were reared in nests lined with eider-down. But all attained their crowns

of fame, and wrote their names on human hearts, by persistent self-culture; and those of them who soared to the topmost heights of moral and spiritual excellence and usefulness, did so by first sitting as lowly pupils at the feet of the great Teacher. Like the "virtuous woman" whose price Solomon declared to be "far above rubies," they were all courageous in beating down obstacles, brave in enduring trial, diligent in their studies and labors, self-denying in their abstinence from hurtful pleasures, and persistent in their duties. They all teach the same great lessons of life to the young women of to-day; namely, that to be happy and useful they must not look upon themselves as dolls, to be dressed, admired, petted, and kept in idleness by parents and husbands, but as human beings, whose destiny hinges on the high or low purposes for which they live—on habits of self-reliance, intellectual toil, industrious employment of their natural gifts, benevolent labors for others, and spiritual self-culture. To encourage women to accept these highest and noblest views of life, it is written that "favor is deceitful and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised."

Englewood, New Jersey.

I.

The Brontë Sisters.

"Nor look nor tone revealeth aught
Save woman's quietness of thought;
And yet around her is a light
Of inward majesty and might."

IN the month of February, 1820, the vicarage of Haworth, in Yorkshire, England, received within its walls the family of the Rev. Patrick Brontë, the newly appointed vicar of Haworth parish. The vicar was a tall, handsome, blue-eyed Irishman, the son of an Irish peasant. His early boyhood had been spent toiling on his father's scanty holding; but by dint of uncommon energy he had managed to prepare himself for Cambridge University, where he took his degree when about thirty years of age. Five years later he had married Maria Branwell, an educated, gentle young lady, reared at sunny Pen-

zance, in Cornwall, but poorly fitted because of her consumptive tendency to do hard battle with the difficulties inseparable from the circumstances of a vicar forced to be content with a stinted salary. Seven years of marriage had brought them six children, with whom they entered into possession of Haworth vicarage.

There is not much either in the house or its surroundings to cheer the spirits of this drooping mother. The long, straggling village of Haworth has no rural attractions. It stands on the slope of a low, bleak, treeless hill. Its rude, comfortless houses, and unattractive mills are built of blackish gray stone. Close to the vicarage garden is the village grave-yard, studded thick with tombstones, and overcrowded with the remains of the village dead. On one side lies the sleepy, monotonous village; on the other a broad expanse of equally monotonous moors. The parsonage itself is an oblong, two-storied structure, built of gray stone. Within we find two parlors of moderate dimensions, separated by a narrow hall, one of which is the vicar's study, the other the family sitting-room. Both are floored with flag-stones. Behind these are a store-room and two kitchens. The upper floor is divided into a like number of bedrooms, one of

which is but a good-sized closet. Into this cheerless abode this feeble mother, with her six little children, is ushered by the stately vicar, who shows scant sympathy with either the little lady's feebleness, or with her very natural shrinkings from the naked discomforts of the unattractive dwelling.

Our interest in this family centers not in the cold, selfish vicar, nor in his gentle wife, who died of cancer seventeen months after her arrival at Haworth; nor in the two elder girls, who died in their youth; nor in the graceless Branwell, the one boy of the family; but in the three younger daughters. These were the *petite*, pale-faced, impetuous Charlotte, little, prattling Emily, and baby Anne, who are destined to be subsequently known to fame as Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell.

These six children were left mostly to their own resources during the last year of their mother's life, and the year following her death, Maria, the eldest, though only little more than eight years old, acted the part of a little mother to her brother and sisters. The vicar spent his time mostly in the seclusion of his study, leaving his motherless children to their own devices. His only servant was without qualifications to teach or guide them. He permitted no communication between his chil-

dren and his humble parishioners. Hence these little ones lived and amused themselves without guidance or care, reading the newspapers, inventing childish plays, and strolling over the moors, "knowing and caring absolutely for no creature outside the walls of their own home." Never had little civilized children less training than they at this period of their lives. Nevertheless, despite this sad lack of affectionate care, they seem to have dearly loved each other, and to have been happy in the wild freedom permitted them.

Twelve months after their mother's death, their maternal aunt, Miss Branwell, came from Cornwall to preside over Mr. Brontë's household. This lady was an antiquated maiden, somewhat strict in her ideas of family discipline, sincerely intending to do her best to train her departed sister's little wildlings in the ways of virtue. But her discipline lacked the subtle power of loving gentleness; and though beneficial in many respects, was not favorable to the development of the best sides of the strong characters they possessed. It failed to bring out their restricted affections. It made the self-willed Charlotte and dogged Emily more self-centered and self-restrained than ever. Little Anne, whose nature was sweet, gentle, and submissive, suffered

least from Miss Branwell's well-meant but mistaken methods of asserting her authority.

Her entrance into the vicarage was nevertheless a blessing to them, in that it led to the curtailment of their gypsy-like freedom, to their acquisition of various housewifely arts, and to some regularity in their study of lessons, which she made them recite to their father, who, however, rarely favored them with his presence. And when he did talk with them at the tea-table, his conversations, instead of being suited to their age and peculiarities of character, were about politics, political men, scenes of horror taken from Irish history, and weird Irish traditions. To these precocious children such topics were stimulants to their wild, morbid tendencies, and, instead of filling their imaginations with pictures of the beautiful, and their hearts with tender and healthful sentiments, peopled the former with images of ungentle, unnatural, fierce, adventurous beings, and begot in the latter morbid, unhealthy feelings. To little Emily those uncanny Irish stories were probably the germs of her powerful but morbidly passionate story, "Wuthering Heights." Had Parson Bronté possessed genuine paternal affection, it would have taught him a wiser method of entertaining his much isolated children.

In 1824, in consequence of their suffering from measles and whooping-cough, the vicar thought it prudent to send four of his little girls to a cheap boarding-school for clergymen's daughters. This change, though well intended, wrought no good to the Brontë children. The school proved to be a house of suffering, disease, and death. Scant, ill-cooked food; a damp, unwholesome building; lack of proper matronly care; and, finally, a death-breathing epidemic fever, caused Maria and Elizabeth, the two oldest of the girls, to die; and, in the Winter of 1825, compelled the return of Charlotte and little Emily to their motherless home, now more gloomy than before, owing to the untimely deaths of the motherly Maria and the patient Elizabeth. In her "Jane Eyre" Charlotte subsequently drew a tragic picture of the horrors of that charnel-house for children, misnamed a school.

Charlotte, Emily, Anne, and the only boy, Branwell, with their father, aunt, and Tabby, the servant, now constituted the Brontë family. The life within that vicarage was active, yet wearisome through lack of variety. The selfish vicar, when not called out to do official duty, spent most of his time in his study. His part in the family life now consisted in hearing Branwell recite his lessons, and, when at the morn-

ing and evening meals, telling the news of the day. Miss Branwell continued to teach housewifery to the three girls, and to give them such religious and other instruction as her narrow mental resources permitted. The little maidens, Emily and Anne especially, found their recreation in long wanderings over the lonely moors which stretched far away from the church-yard toward the distant hills. In the evenings, in place of more juvenile and suitable reading, these neglected children perused the tory newspapers of the day, *Blackwood's Magazine*, Southey's romances, and Sir Walter Scott's poems. They also invented plays, and made heroes for themselves out of what they read in the newspapers concerning the leading men of the day. They were still strongly attached to each other. They were not unhappy, yet their lives were unnaturally narrowed by their isolation from the outer world, of which they knew next to nothing, except what they learned from the newspapers and from their brother, who was, alas! already beginning to know it through the idle youths who lounged about the parlors of the Black Bull Inn, which stood hard by the church.

In 1831 Charlotte was sent away to school, where she remained about eighteen months. What she learned there, she taught, after her return home,

to Emily and Anne. She found them apt scholars. Emily was especially quick in learning to draw. All of them were much in the habit of writing stories and poems, for which they had a natural aptitude. In 1833 their lives were touched and favorably influenced by the visit of a young lady, named Ellen Nussey, with whom Charlotte had formed an intimate and lasting friendship at school.

Emily dreaded the presence of strangers. Her isolation from general society and her habit of wandering on the treeless moors, had bred in her mind not merely a dread, but a hatred, of strange faces. Nevertheless, the gentle manners and affectionate spirit of Miss Nussey won Emily's regard, and the two became fast friends. This fact suggested to the thoughtful Charlotte that, as Emily's sympathies had been won by the presence of one congenial mind, they might possibly be broadened by such contact with other girls of her age as would be occasioned by the necessary associations of boarding-school life. Hence, when she was herself invited to teach in the school in which she had been whilom a pupil, she persuaded Emily to enter it as a student.

Emily was now, 1835, sixteen years old, and ambitious to acquire sufficient education to earn her own living. But she dreaded the constraint of

school as intensely as she loved the unrestricted freedom of her home-life. To her, the moor, with its heather-bells, its birds, its timid hares, its moorland sheep, its tiny water-courses, its green hollows, and its unrestricted field of vision, was her ideal Eden. How, then, could she endure the circumscribed range of a boarding-school grounds, with its compulsory association, day and night, with companions for whose friendship she felt not only no desire, but a positive antipathy? Yet the reserved girl, desirous of acting a noble part in life, made up her mind to overcome her prejudices if she could. And so she became a student in the school wherein Charlotte was beginning to test her skill as a teacher.

As the captured bird, long accustomed to the freedom of the skies, pines and forgets to sing when imprisoned in a cage, so did Emily Brontë pine and droop at school. Her will was bent on being contented there; but despite her purpose, her face grew pale, her figure shrunk, her strength declined, and the watchful Charlotte, seeing that her uncomplaining sister would soon die if she remained, counseled the mistress of the school to send her home. Emily then left, and the gentle, submissive Anne took her place. Her old life at Haworth soon proved an effectual tonic for Emily's homesickness, and

the breath of the moors speedily restored the health which three months of school life had well-nigh destroyed.

When, in the Autumn of 1836, Charlotte resumed her duties at the opening of a new school-term, and Anne returned to her studies, Emily surprised all the family by accepting the post of teacher in a school of forty pupils, near Halifax. The duties imposed upon her there kept her busy from six in the morning until eleven at night. No wonder that at the end of six months she found her "health broken down, shattered by long-resisted homesickness;" and that she was obliged to return home once more, to renew her vigor and recover her spirits, by breathing the free air of her beloved moors.

From the time of her return from Halifax until she went to Brussels with Charlotte in 1842, Emily spent her time at home, toiling at her household duties. Charlotte and Anne were at school-teaching, during much of that period. Branwell—the handsome, gifted, impulsive, unprincipled Branwell—was also often away, sometimes doing duty as usher in a school, or as private tutor in a family, or as railway station-master or clerk; but always a rolling stone, shifting from one thing to another, adhering only to his habits of dissipation. When these three were

away, Haworth vicarage was a place of housewifely toil for the gifted Emily. Yet so long as she could enjoy the freedom of her Eden, the solitary moors, accompanied by her fierce but faithful dog, she was cheerful and content, if not exuberantly happy. When her sisters were at home at their vacation times, her cup of enjoyment, despite the extra household labor made necessary by the lameness of old Tabby, was overflowingly full. No literary ambition seems to have been as yet awakened in Emily or Anne. But Charlotte was not wholly without the instinct of authorship, when she and Branwell sent some of their poetic compositions to Southey, to Coleridge, and to Wordsworth, hoping for encouragement which they did not receive.

Wearied by the hated work of governessing under the direction of exacting superiors, the three girls resolved at last to establish a school of their own at Haworth. It had once been the dream of their young lives to earn money to pay their brother's expenses as a student at the Royal Academy. That hope gradually expired in the grief of their discovery that he was so far enslaved by dissipated habits that he could not be safely sent into the temptations of London life. But, though that dream was thus rudely dissolved, the necessity for self-support still

pressed upon them. Their father was growing old. His vigor was declining. He had to employ a curate. His death must be viewed as a possible fact lying somewhere in the near future. They must therefore give their attention to the means of self-support. To live by authorship was something not yet admitted into their thoughts. What better project could they entertain, therefore, than to establish a school at the old vicarage? After much talking and consultation, they resolved to make the attempt.

But their lack of sufficient accomplishments now stared them in the face. They were well-informed, mature in thought and feeling, highly gifted; but their pronunciation of French was far from pure; their knowledge of German was superficial; their musical acquirements were not such as teachers needed to possess. Hence, ambitious Charlotte proposed that, their Aunt Branwell consenting to assist them with a portion of her savings, she and Emily should spend six months in an educational establishment at Brussels, and then that all three sisters should open an academy in some more attractive spot than Haworth. "A school taught by three clergyman's daughters educated on the Continent," said Charlotte, laughing merrily at her own conceit, "can not fail to attract pupils!"

After overcoming many obstacles, this scheme was matured. To the hopeful, ambitious, daring Charlotte, there was life and inspiration in it; to the reserved, shrinking, home-loving Emily, it was torture to think of going among strangers. Nevertheless, the brave girl yielded her reluctant consent, and in February, 1842, the two sisters, conducted by their eccentric father, left Haworth, and were duly installed among the Belgian girls who were pupils of Madame Héger's Pensionnat in the Rue d'Isabelle, Brussels.

To the genial demoiselles in Madame Héger's school, these two young English women must have appeared strange and uncouth creatures. Charlotte was twenty-six years old, Emily twenty-four. Neither was handsome. Both were shy and reserved; stiff and prim in their manners, their mode of dressing was so lacking in grace and fashion, and their Yorkshire French so bungling, as to be matter of surprise and jest. Emily carried her reserve so far as to resist the efforts of the more kindly disposed girls to draw her into conversation. She would have no companion but her sister. Her body was in Brussels, but her heart was in Yorkshire. Charlotte's reserve was less extreme, and she formed one or two friendships among the Belgian girls.

Both sisters devoted themselves to earnest, conscientious study, and both made rapid progress, though their dispositions, as seen by their teacher, were in singular contrast. Monsieur Héger, though kind at heart, was choleric, despotic, and exacting as a teacher. Charlotte deferred to him with meek submissiveness; but Emily disputed with him, and resented his self-assertion with fiery words. Nevertheless, his judgment taught him that, while Charlotte possessed the more docile nature, Emily was the superior genius. Speaking of the wealth of her imagination, the keenness of her reasoning powers, the strength of her imperial will, and the vigor of her style, he said: "She ought to have been a man!" He was probably right in his opinion of her superior genius; albeit she did not live long enough, as we shall see, fully to demonstrate his judgment before the world.

Six months of study wrought large results in both of these remarkable women. So apparent was this to Madame Héger that she proposed their continuance at the school the following term without other payment than for Emily to teach music to the younger pupils, and for Charlotte to serve as her teacher of English. Emily's homesick heart protested against this proposal, though her judgment

approved it. Charlotte's ardent desire for higher learning inclined her to accept it with enthusiasm. Instruction and association had kindled her creative power into life. Her imagination was unconsciously storing up images for subsequent use, and her fancy busy giving shape to characters and scenes which were destined to be wrought into "Villette," the masterpiece of her literary work. Her inclination to remain finally triumphed over Emily's homesick desires to return, and they entered into an agreement with Madame Héger to that effect. But they had scarcely begun their appointed work when they were summoned back to Haworth by the mortal illness of their aunt. On their arrival home they found her dead!

The death of their aunt made it necessary that one of the three sisters should henceforth remain at home with their father. Which should it be? Anne had a good position as governess in a private family; Charlotte had one offer from the head of a young ladies' school, and another from her old teacher at Brussels. The former was the more profitable; but her heart longed for the intellectual activity, the opportunity to learn, and the society of the light-hearted girls to be enjoyed at the latter. As for Emily, she preferred Haworth, with its secluded

life and its moorland surroundings to any other earthly spot. It was therefore determined that she should remain with her father, and her sisters go to their school duties.

Charlotte was not happy after her return to Brussels. "I returned to it," she wrote years after, "against my conscience, prompted by what then seemed an irresistible impulse. I was punished for my selfish folly by a total withdrawal for more than two years of happiness and peace of mind." Whence arose this state of mental unrest? Some attribute it, though without reason, to a love affair. Others see in it the throes of her awakening genius, the agitation of a mind quickened to a vague consciousness of power to accomplish some great work which she vainly struggled to define. The materials for "Villette," her masterpiece, say these critics, were then taking shape in her agitated soul. Hence these days of "storm and stress," says Mr. Reid. But why should the incoming of such chaotic images associated with a dawning consciousness of creative power cause disturbance in her "*conscience?*" Her confession cited above proves her disturbance was not mainly intellectual, but moral. "I returned to Brussels," she says, "against my conscience."

What, then, was her unhappiness but the result

of a conflict between her inclination and her sense of duty? What she had already gained at Brussels had unfitted her to find contentment in the monotonous life of her Haworth home. It had also awakened aspirations, impulses, and cravings for that still higher intellectual development to be attained through further association with the teachers, Monsieur Héger especially, of her now beloved Pensionnat. To this *inclination* her conscience said, "It is your duty to your father and your younger sister to stay at Haworth." Her conscience may have been, probably was, super-sensitive. Nevertheless, by subjecting it to the control of her inclination, she caused it to wound her with its tormenting sting.

This struggle, continued for nearly two years, necessarily curdled her feelings, and threw her into a morbid state of mind, which colored all her thoughts about herself with gloom. As her intellect gained more and more power, and her observations on human character and life took a wider range, she sought to penetrate the mists which hid her own future. For what end am I acquiring knowledge and gaining power? for what work am I fitted? where shall I find my fitting sphere of action? what is "my state in life?" were queries

which seemed to have perplexed her sensitive nature. Moreover, the fact that in one of her most melancholy moods, she went into a Romish church, entered a confessional, and poured the story of her perplexities into the ears of an unknown priest, suggests that the problem of her relation to God had someting to do with her distressed state of mind. Her father's creed bore the stamp of Calvinism, in which there is but little balm for wounded minds. The unhappy girl needed the consolations of a more Scriptural faith during those gloomy months. Had she been conscious of the Redeemer's love, presence, and guidance, she would assuredly not have lived two years without "happiness and peace of mind."

Her life at Brussels was brought to an end by a summons from her sister to return to Haworth, where home affairs were becoming too burdensome for Emily to bear alone. Tabby, their old servant, was ill. All the house-work was on Emily's shoulders. The aged vicar was growing blind, and beginning to use strong drink more freely than had been his wont. Branwell, too, was sinking deeper and deeper in the mire of his loathsome vices. These ill-omened facts broke the silken bond which bound Charlotte to Brussels, and on the 2d of

January, 1844, she folded "mine bonnie love"—her pet phrase for Emily—in her arms within the walls of the Haworth parsonage.

The three sisters now sought to realize their cherished dream of keeping a school of their own. As leaving their aged and almost blind father was now out of the question, their school must be kept in the gloomy old parsonage. They sent out circulars. But what mother, having seen Haworth, would send her daughter thither? Not one. And so the old vision faded away like a rainbow, and was lost in a cloud of disappointment. Alas for these poor sisters three!

A still heavier trial awaited them. Anne had been governess in a family which also employed her brother as tutor to its boys. The bad young man had disgraced himself in that household. Ashamed of his misconduct, Anne left her pupils, and Branwell himself, being peremptorily dismissed, went home covered with dishonor. What those sisters endured during the two years following their shameless brother's return home, to be a daily shame and a burden on their stinted resources, can not be conceived, much less described. We have only space in this brief sketch to add that in 1848 this slave of dissipation died pitied by all, but regretted

probably by none but the boon companions of his orgies at the Bull Inn.

In 1845 these much-tried sisters accidentally discovered that, unknown to one another, they had all been in the habit of writing verses. This discovery led them, after much consultation, to collect a sufficient number of their poems to make a small volume, and to send the manuscript to London. After considerable correspondence, they found a publisher willing to issue their book on commission. It came out as poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell, names standing respectively for Charlotte, Emily, and Anne. Poor girls! Their book cost them thirty guineas of their little store of money; but, though some of the poems were not without merit, the volume met with very little praise and no sale. Thus their first attempt at authorship was a discouraging failure.

Yet, though discouraged and mortified, these noble women did not despair. They had the courage of strong character, the consciousness of unrecognized literary power, a strong confidence of ultimate success as writers, and the pinching of pecuniary needs, present and prospective, to spur them to fresh endeavors. Accordingly, after much deliberation, they agreed that each should write a novel!

Others, they said, had gained popularity and made money by novel-writing; why should not we?

Never before were three novels produced in the manner pursued by these sisters. In the evening, after the house-work of the day was finished, they gathered round a table, compared notes, discussed plots, characters, names, and even the chapters into which their books were to be divided. These points settled, each took her pen and proceeded in silence with her work, far into the night. Thus working through many evenings, Charlotte produced "The Professor;" Emily, "Wuthering Heights;" and Anne, "Agnes Grey." As soon as finished, the manuscripts were sent forth under the old names of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell, to seek a publisher.

Dreary, disconsolate months of almost hopeless waiting succeeded. Their home troubles were, indeed, sufficient to crush ordinary women. The parson had become blind, and Charlotte had to take him to Manchester for treatment by an oculist. Branwell was still living out his dissipated and disgraced life at the vicarage. Emily's heart was saddened as the shadow of death drew nearer to that doomed brother. Anne's delicate health was sinking beneath the nightmare pressure of Branwell's shame. To these trials the weight of

repeated literary disappointments were now added. Publisher after publisher returned their manuscripts, rejected. O, unfortunate children of genius!

Poor Charlotte received her rejected "Professor" on the day of the critical operation upon her father's eyes, during which she was required to be present. Yet such was her strength of will that, despite the fearful strain upon her nerves, she sat down in her lonely chamber that same night and began "Jane Eyre!"

It was well for her fame that she had this heroic measure of courage. Had she given way at that moment, the world would probably have never heard of the Brontë sisters. But her endurance saved them from oblivion. "Jane Eyre" was written, and, says Mr. T. W. Reid, "on August 24, 1847, the story is sent from Leeds to London; and before the year is out, all England is ringing with the praises of the novel and its author." Patient endurance had brought her the crown her genius had won.

Emily and Anne were also encouraged, while "Jane Eyre" was in press, by the acceptance, though on wretched terms, of their manuscripts. "Wuthering Heights" and "Agnes Grey" were, therefore, to see the light, and test the power of their fair authors to win such popularity as awaited their

sister. The decision of the world, while giving the credit of genius to all three, placed the palm on Charlotte's brow. When Emily's tragic "Wuthering Heights" appeared, says Miss Robinson, "the peals of triumph which acclaimed the success of 'Jane Eyre' had no echo for the work of Ellis Bell." Two years later it attracted more attention, and won not unmixed admiration, nor enthusiastic praise, but recognition as a work of genius of marked originality, of painfully tragic power, but marred by many glaring faults. And when, still later, the story of Emily's strangely isolated life was given to the public, candid critics were compelled to accept it as a rare "curiosity in literature." But this recognition of its claims was never known to Emily. Before it was given she had become the bride of death. A severe cold, taken at the burial of her unhappy brother, whom she loved with all the strength of a pure, but undeserved, sisterly affection, produced inflammation of the lungs. He had been her special care during the last year of his wretched life. His death seemed, therefore, to rob her of her life-work. It left her a prey to gloomy spirits, as well as to disease. Beneath this twofold burden she sunk rapidly. In December, 1848, she found a resting-place in the family grave.

Anne's novel, "Agnes Grey," was too commonplace to be widely popular. Her next work, "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall," was also unfavorably received. It was, says Mr. Reid, "a dreary and repulsive picture of Branwell Brontë's condition after his fall." Charlotte considered it "an entire mistake" as to its "choice of subject," inspired by "pure" yet "slightly morbid motives," and written from an impulse of mistaken duty. But public opinion soon became of small consequence to Anne's gentle spirit. In May, 1849, she, too, passed away, saying, as she died, to her weeping sister:

"Take courage, Charlotte, take courage!"

Emily had died, as Charlotte said, in "a time of promise." "Wuthering Heights" was the work of inexperienced, unfurnished, undeveloped genius, but showed great literary possibilities. Anne's genius was less promising of future achievements. Both had passed away in their prime, yet with the difference in the manner of their departure between faith in evangelical truth, and a vague trust in God, not as the father of the Lord Jesus Christ, but as God the Creator and Preserver of men. Hence, to cite Mr. Reid, "Emily's proud spirit refused to be conquered, and up to the last agony, she carried herself as one sternly indifferent to the weaknesses

of the flesh, including that final weakness which must conquer all of us in the end. Anne found consolation, pure and deep, in her religious faith, and she died cheerfully, in the firm belief that she was entering into that fuller life which lay beyond the grave."

Bereft of her beloved sisters, compelled by filial obligation to make her home in the dreary parsonage with her uncompanionable father, and to live in the midst of people with none of whom could she form personal friendships, poor Charlotte's life was now sad and dreary. Yet she did not lose heart and hope, but did what her hand found to do. The key-note of her life is contained in this sentiment, found in a letter to her friend Ellen: "Submission, courage, exertion when practicable—these seem to be the weapons with which we must fight life's long battle."

Under the inspiration of this thought, she sought refuge from the monotony of her household duties in writing what some of her best critics esteem as "the brightest and healthiest of her works." She named it "Shirley." In that character she impersonated her beloved Emily, as she did her friend Ellen in that of Caroline Helston. Her work being inspired by the two strongest affections of her strong

nature, and constructed with artistic skill improved by previous practice, the reader will not be surprised to learn that when "Shirley" appeared, as it did in the Autumn of 1849, it was greeted with a loud outcry of praise, both by the critics and the public. "Jane Eyre" had given her reputation as a writer of more than ordinary power. "Shirley" increased and established that reputation. When she visited London in 1850, her presence was courted by literary men and women. Had she been at all disposed to seek notoriety, she might have been lionized. But her shrinking, reserved nature, her constrained manner, her precise and formal modes of speech, her unfashionable dress, and her somewhat insignificant person, all unfitted her to shine as a queen in cultivated society. In such a nature as hers, this unfitness awakened no regret. Society had recognized her genius. The sale of her books had relieved her from the fear of prospective want. Could she have been favored with good health and placed in a home of beauty and affection, despite the deep darkness of the past, she might have yet found her life, if not joyous, yet peaceful and happy.

But at present, at least, this condition was not within her reach. New trials yet awaited her. She had an offer of marriage from a pertinacious suitor

whom she could respect, but to whom she could not give that affection which her pure mind thought necessary to a happy marriage. She finally refused him, but his earnestly pressed suit cost her no small measure of mental agitation. Besides this, she was oppressed with household cares, made weighty by the ill-health and querulousness of her exacting father. Next came the severe strain of great physical weakness. Amid all this, her unconquered spirit grappled with the task of writing yet another book, which an admiring critic, with some exaggeration, calls "a marvelous book, a masterpiece destined to hold its own among the ripest and finest fruits of English genius."

This work, which she named "Villette," cost her vastly more than the ordinary mental strain of continued writing under the pressure of nervous prostration and bodily weakness. It contains the bitter experiences of her own deeply shadowed life. It is in no mean sense an autobiography of her own inner life, disguised by names and circumstances invented to conceal her personality from the public, and from all, indeed, but the very few to whom she had revealed more or less of the secrets of her singular, but remarkable, nature. To reproduce these sad experiences with the pen was to live much of

her isolated, yet troubled, life over again. It was to drink daily for many weary months, and that for a second time, from a cup of anguish such as is rarely put to the lips of the children of sorrow. Yet she drank it bravely. And when "Villette" appeared, in 1853, it was received, not with the vulgar acclamation awarded to a popular novel, but with the more serious praise due to a book which, though a novel in form, is yet "such a heart-history," says Reid, "as remains to this day without a rival in the school of English fiction to which it belongs. . . . From critics of every school and degree there came up a cry of wonder and admiration, as men saw out of what simple characters and commonplace incidents genius had evoked this striking work of literary art."

But what is fame to a crushed heart? Charlotte Brontë was taught its utter emptiness by her cruel experience during this period of her greatest literary triumph. While "Villette" was in preparation, Mr. Arthur Nichols, her father's curate, became a suitor for her hand. Unsuspected by her, he had for some time so studied her character as to become strongly bound to her by a deep affection, based on profound respect. When he made a declaration of his regard Charlotte was taken by surprise, but soon

felt that such a manly love as he offered her was the great need of her desolate heart. His devoted attentions awakened hopes so bright that at first she scarcely dared to cherish them. When she did, like a true daughter, she spoke of the curate's proposal of marriage to her father. But that stern old man, whose cold heart and iron will had blasted the lives of his wife and children, flew into such a furious passion that she was terrified. For a moment her new-born love for her suitor struggled with her strong sense of filial obligation. The latter conquered, and while her heart throbbed with agonized feeling, she heroically pledged her word to give Mr. Nichols a distinct refusal on the morrow.

The refusal was given. The curate resigned, and left Haworth with a grieved spirit; but Charlotte, while the voices of the public were ringing out the praises of her genius, began to sink beneath the obdurate refusal of her cruel father to consent to her marriage. A few months sufficed to show the fatal nature of the wound he had inflicted on the daughter who had sacrificed so much for his sake. Her health and strength evidently declined. The vicar, who loved her as much as his cold nature permitted him to love any one, and who had rejected Mr. Nichols only because he was not a man

of wealth and note, finally relented. He bade Charlotte send for the curate. Mr. Nichols obeyed her summons, returned to Haworth, freely forgave the irate old vicar, and on June 29, 1854, Charlotte became his happy bride.

Their marriage, during its brief continuance, was a source of sweet content to this sorely tried woman, and of happiness to both. But it soon became a blighted flower. After a few months Charlotte's health began to decline, and on the 31st of March, 1855, she passed from dreary Haworth into the beautiful land where the weary are at rest.

The news of her death was received by the reading public with deep regret. The publication of her memoir by Mrs. Gaskell, shortly after, was a revelation concerning her and her sisters which astonished all who had read their works, and it gave a fresh impetus to their sale. People wondered how women so unfavorably situated could write such books, and many were filled with admiration for the nobility of character they had displayed. Mrs. Gaskell's memoir also led to the publication of Charlotte's first novel, "The Professor," which had failed to find a publisher in the days of her obscurity. This book, without detracting from, added nothing to her celebrity, albeit it illustrated the

hopeful spirit of her life during her stay at Brussels. The memoir was a fitting supplement to the novels, which can not be adequately interpreted without it or some other of the portraitures of these gifted sisters which have been since given to the world.

These sisters three, though far from perfect in their lives and characters, will always command a large measure of admiration, not for genius only, but for the courage which enabled them to battle, not without success, against conditions of life calculated in themselves to prevent the healthy development of either their minds or hearts. Motherless almost from infancy, having a father who seems to have been strangely deficient in paternal sympathies, living isolated from society in a drearily situated home, left much to themselves, without sufficient suitable instruction during the years of childhood, unsupplied with reading that contained suitable food for thought, their religious conceptions formed after the pattern of that pitiless iron creed known as ultra Calvinism, and having no examples of evangelical piety before their eyes, is it any wonder that they were eccentric, more or less morbid, shy, reticent, ignorant of society and its ways, unconventional, and somewhat self-willed? Nay. They could, indeed, have scarcely been otherwise. The wonder

is that, with all their disadvantages, they became true, brave, courageous, affectionate, dutiful women, large in heart and brain, and able to command and hold, if not the unqualified admiration, yet the respectful attention and affectionate regard of the reading world. Achieving all this under such unfavorable opportunities, they inspire one with the belief that, had they been favored with only ordinary means of self-culture, ethical teaching, and spiritual training, they would have taken the highest rank as Christian women and as writers.

II.

Hannah Adams.

"Virtue shall enroll your names
In Time's eternal records." —GLOVER.

"Her cheek was pale; but resolved and high
Was the word of her pen."

IN Duyckinck's "Cyclopedia of American Literature" it is said that Hannah Adams "was probably the first woman in the country to devote herself to a literary life, and this, too, at a time when the temptations which such a career could offer to either sex were insignificant, either in view of fame or gain." And the writers of the "Introductory Notes" to her memoirs say, "Among those who have overcome great and peculiar difficulties in the pursuit of knowledge, she holds a distinguished place. She became a literary woman when literature was a rare accomplishment in this country."

These statements place Miss Adams before the reader as an exceptional woman, standing in a position before the public which no American lady had previously ventured to occupy. Hence the reader very naturally inquires, what influences moved her to try her fortune as a writer. What were the qualities and the circumstances which helped her to win success? A glance at the facts in her simple record will show that her own impulses, quickened by the necessities of her condition, gave inspiration to her pen, and that by the forces of her strong character she made her very unfavorable circumstances bend to her will. In no narrow sense, therefore, she was the architect of her own fortune—a self-made woman.

Miss Adams was a native of the pleasant town of Medfield, Massachusetts, where she was born in 1756. Her father was in a false position; that is, in a pursuit for which both his health and tastes unfitted him. In his boyhood he had been through a course of preparation for the university, but when he was of age to enter, his parents, thinking him physically too delicate to leave home, obliged him to settle on their large farm. Either from lack of capacity or will, he did not greatly prosper as a farmer, and therefore, after his marriage, he rented

his farm and opened a store, which he stocked not only with dry-goods and groceries, but also with a large assortment of books, better suited, perhaps, to the popular demand than to his own tastes.

Hannah's mother was a sensitive and delicate lady. It is not strange, therefore, that both father and mother being infirm, the daughter inherited from them a feeble constitution and a very excitable nervous system. The tenderness of her mother led her to permit Hannah to form habits of "debilitating softness." The family being then in affluent circumstances, there appeared no probability that she would ever be obliged to depend for support upon her own exertions. Why, then, should she not be tenderly reared? What need of alarm because the child disliked childish amusements, or because she was not sufficiently strong regularly to attend the district school, or because she was so timid and shy that she shrunk from appearing in company? Would she not, despite all these hindrances to the acquisition of qualities necessary to combat with the difficulties of life, be a dove sheltered in the soft nest of a home made comfortable by wealth and happy by parental fondness?

So it seemed for a time. But when this delicate child was only ten years old her mother died. Not

long after, her aunt, who was a second mother to her, died also. A few years later her father, plundered by the men who managed his farm and unfortunate in his business transactions, became bankrupt. Then the once affluent farmer and store-keeper was reduced to the necessity of taking boarders to eke out a living. Thus the prospects of our sensitive, delicate young maiden were no longer bright, but wrapped in folds of darkness.

Nevertheless there was, though scarcely as yet perceptible, a silver lining to those frowning clouds. This lining consisted in the development of the maiden's intellectual powers and literary tastes. True, she had not learned much during her occasional attendance at the district school, since in those early days, as Hannah's biographer remarks, the "village school-master much resembled Goldsmith's, of whom

> 'The village all declared how much he knew;
> 'T was certain he could write, and cipher too.'"

But nature had given her an "ardent curiosity and a desire to acquire knowledge." Her first concept of heaven, she writes, "was of a place where we should find our thirst for knowledge fully gratified." She had of her own sweet will fed this appetite for knowledge by much reading of the books in her

father's large library and on the shelves in his store. Her memory, too, was very tenacious. And though she preferred novels, romances, and poems to more solid reading, yet she had not wholly refrained from poring over the pages of historians and biographers. And when her father had among his boarders some educated gentlemen, who, drawn to her probably by the charms of her amiable character, offered to aid her studies, she gladly accepted their offer, and soon made such rapid progress in the rudiments of Latin, Greek, logic, and geography, that not many years after she actually fitted three young men for college! Of the extent of her early reading she writes, "Perhaps few of my sex have perused more books at the age of twenty than I had."

But it was now necessary that Hannah should do something toward her own support. Poverty had come to stand like an armed man at her father's door, and to compel her to be a bread-winner. Physically unfitted for laborious employment, she took to "weaving lace with bobbins on a cushion." When this fairly profitable work ceased to find purchasers, as it did after the reopening of our commerce with Europe at the close of the War of the Revolution, she took to spinning, to weaving, and then to braiding straw. Do what she would, however, her

pecuniary returns were barely sufficient to keep the wolf of want from her door. To add to her trials, her eyes were subject to inflammation and her general health was feeble. "And yet," she cheerily said, "I had then enjoyments of which the rich have no idea. When I had any work brought in, that would enable me to earn a few shillings by which I might buy paper or any articles of stationery, I engaged in writing with an interest that beguiled the monotony of my life." There was pleasure in this opportunity to earn a little money, but it was only such pleasure as the starving man enjoys when a plateful of bread is given him with which to satisfy the pangs of hunger for a season. It did not remove the cloud which shrouded her prospects, nor free her from the anxieties which gnawed at her heart like a worm hidden in a rosebud.

The pecuniary needs of Miss Adams spurred her into the field of authorship. She had already begun to write for her own improvement, having been moved thereto by the perusal of some passages from "Broughton's Dictionary," giving an account of the various religious denominations in the world. These passages piqued her curiosity. She wished to know more than they contained concerning opinions, to maintain which so many different sects

existed. Hence she read all the books on the question that she could procure. The lack of candor and charity shown in many of those works disgusted her kindly nature; and she forthwith began to compile a manuscript in which she gave her own views of their agreements and differences, but with no thought at the time of offering her compilation to the public. But when her lace became unsalable, because of the renewed importation of foreign laces after the war, and her other employments proved insufficient for her support, she bravely resolved to enlarge her plan, and give her "View of Religions" to the world. "It was desperation," said she in after years, "and not vanity that induced me to publish."

It was a bold project for a mind so poorly prepared by previous suitable studies to treat the many difficult problems involved. It required much patient research and varied reading. But her courage was equal to the height of her ambitious purpose, and so also was her perseverance. She sought diligently for the books required, read them carefully, weighed their opinions in the scale of charity, abridged their contents, grew enthusiastic over her task, and finally completed it. She was then twenty-eight years old.

The manuscript was ready for the press; but how was it to be published? Her father, with little business judgment, seems to have managed to find a printer, who, after she, aided by her father, had procured some four hundred subscribers for it, brought out the volume, pocketed the proceeds, and gave her fifty copies, for which she had to find purchasers, as the pitiful return for her toil! Alas, poor girl! She had fallen into the hands of a thoroughly selfish man.

It is not surprising, therefore, that, when this pecuniary disappointment was added to the exhaustion caused by her severe mental toil in preparing the book, she became the victim of severe nervous prostration. For a time it seemed as if disease would speedily terminate both her labors and her life. At last, by Heaven's blessing on the skillful measures of her physician, she was restored to health.

She was now cheered by information from her selfish printer, that there was a demand for a second edition of her book. Would she contract with him to publish it? With becoming spirit she emphatically replied, "No." She would try, she thought, to print it for her own benefit. While looking for means to execute this very questionable plan, she

was most sorely smitten by the death of her elder sister, Elizabeth, of whom she said: "There was but one heart between us, and I used sometimes to tell her, in the overflowing of my affection, that I could bear to lose every thing if she was spared to me, but that if she were taken away I should surely die." Yet it pleased the Master of life to take her beloved Elizabeth to himself, through the illuminated gate of a calm Christian death. Hannah's grief was for a time excessive, and she exclaimed:

> "The world 's a desert. Nothing now on earth
> Can yield me joy or comfort."

But time, "the great healer," with the comfort she found in the study of the consolatory passages of Holy Writ, enabled her to recover hope and mental elasticity. And although her poor health, her pecuniary destitution, her father's poverty, and her brother's inability to support her, stalked like haunting specters in her path, she yet roused herself from the stupor of grief, and resolved to struggle with energy once more for the means of self-support.

Having made additions to her "View of Religions," she now opened a correspondence with several printers, with a view to its publication;

but, except from one, recived none but ambiguous, meaningless replies. While in Boston seeking to negotiate with that one, she was fortunately introduced by a friend to the Rev. Mr. Freeman, a large-hearted man, who aided her so judiciously and effectively, that in 1791 the second edition of her work was published. It was so successful that, from her share in its proceeds, she was placed, she says, "in a comfortable situation;" she paid her debts, and "put out a small sum upon interest."

Miss Adams had dedicated this edition of her "View of Religions" to the venerable President Adams, who had already taken a sympathetic interest in her success, and with whom she occasionally corresponded. Though her name indicated relationship to him, the connection could not be directly and positively traced. Nevertheless, in one of his letters to her, Mr. Adams courteously wrote:

"You and I are undoubtedly related by birth, and, although we were both 'born in humble obscurity,' yet I presume neither of us has any cause to regret that circumstance. If I could ever suppose that family pride was in any case excusable, I should think a descent from a line of virtuous, independent farmers, for one hundred and sixty years,

was a better fountain for it than a descent through royal or titled scoundrels ever since the flood."

This was sound democratic doctrine, flattering, no doubt, to the practical and serious-minded Miss Adams, because it ranked her ancestry, as well as his, not among the peerage of the herald's office in London or Paris, but among those genuine peers and peeresses whose patent of nobility was earned, not by the sword or by flattering princes, but by patient industry and self-denying virtue.

Success stimulates laudable ambition. In the case of Miss Adams it moved her to attempt a second work, called "A Summary History of New England." To obtain the requisite information for this undertaking, besides consulting the works then existing, she made researches among the State papers of Rhode Island. Hoping to gain something more than present subsistence from this work, she toiled early and late to complete it. In doing this she overtasked her powers of endurance, and so injured her eyes that, for two years, she had to lay aside her pen. As soon as her eyes were restored she resumed her labors, finished her manuscript, and had it printed at her own expense in 1799. She was then forty-three years old, and, as she says, "derived but little profit" from her labor.

While writing this book it appears that she taught district schools in several towns during the Summer months, generally "boarding round," as the custom then was, in the homes of her pupils.

A third edition of her "View of Religions" being called for, the Rev. Mr. Freeman again rendered her such business assistance that she obtained five hundred dollars for an edition of two thousand copies. This sum was as a cordial to one who is faint, and a stimulant to further efforts in her chosen pursuit.

Her next production was a "Concise View of the Christian Religion," selected from the writings of *eminent laymen*. It was written under the serious difficulty of making the booksellers' shops in Boston her places of labor, because of her need to consult books which she could not borrow, and which she was too poor to buy. When it was finished, she could find no better publisher than a man who gave her the pitiful compensation of one hundred dollars, *in books*, for the copyright. It was published in 1804.

With genuine New England perseverance, Miss Adams, still refusing to yield to discouragement because of the meager pecuniary fruits of her patient labors, prepared an abridgment of her "History

of New England," for the use of schools. She was very sanguine that this work would fill her purse; but when it was finished she was grieved to find that it had been anticipated by a similar book, from the pen of the Rev. Jedediah Morse, a well-known and accomplished clergyman. Nevertheless, despite this formidable obstacle to its success, after some delay, she had it put to press. And then—alas for this patient and much-tried lady!—her printer failed before it was published, and she gained not a penny from it. Singularly enough, she met with a similar misfortune two years after, while a second edition was in the hands of another party! It seemed as if her mettle was destined to be tested to the uttermost by untoward circumstances.

But her impulse to write was still vigorous, and her courage so undismayed that she undertook still another work, requiring wider research than any of her previous books. She would write a history of the Jews, a formidable task even for one in vigorous health and possessing a full knowledge of the subject. Yet she undertook it with her usual enthusiasm, removing first to Dedham, and then to Boston, that she might find access to the standard authorities which were to be the basis of her compilation. She had previously formed the acquaintance

of the Rev. Mr. Buckminster, the eloquent and learned pastor of Brattle Street Church, and he generously gave her the unlimited use of his valuable library. President Adams invited her to Quincy, with liberty to explore the alcoves of his library in search of information. The Athenæum also gave her the free use of its literary treasures. Several gentlemen of high position, impressed by her zeal, ability, and character, favored her with their counsels; and ladies of the highest social standing took deep interest in her work and welfare. Better even than all this recognition of her worth, was the fact that these ladies and gentlemen voluntarily secured her an annuity, which relieved her of anxiety with respect to her future, and left her with liberty, unembarassed by care, to devote herself to her darling pursuits.

Miss Adams unconsciously betrayed one secret of her working capacity while gathering materials for her history of the Jews in the library of President Adams. Struck with the rapidity of her examinations of the heavy folios containing the writings of the fathers, he pleasantly questioned her one day as to their contents. Her ready replies surprised him. They showed that, while rapidly glancing from page to page, she had actually culled

from them all they contained *apropos* to her proposed work. Quickness of perception, with a power of abstraction from all but the work in hand, and a most tenacious memory, made her a marvelous gatherer of facts and ideas. In the library of the Athenæum, too, her abstraction was such that she was sometimes absolutely unconscious of what passed around her. When spending a day in its alcoves, as she often did, she took no note of time. When the hour of noon struck, the librarian on several occasions tried to notify her in vain. Seeing her so absorbed in her book, that nothing less than discourteous urgency could break her reveries, he would give up the attempt, lock the door of the building, and go home to his luncheon. On his return he would find her in the same spot, unaware that it was past noon, and that she had been the sole occupant of the library for the preceding hour.

After mentioning this fact to her one day, a friend asked, "Is it true, Miss Adams, that you have been thus lost to every thing but your work?"

"It is much exaggerated," she smilingly replied. "I do n't think it ever happened more than once or twice."

But who was the better witness in such a case? Doubtless the observant librarian, not the abstracted

student. But may not these abstracted moods account both for her ability as a compiler and for the physical exhaustion which so frequently followed her weeks and months of application? A body lacking constitutional soundness could but suffer in some of its functions from such periods of profound mental abstraction.

Aided by the ample materials found in these libraries, Miss Adams threw her whole strength into her proposed history, and opened correspondence with some learned men and women in Europe, seeking information not to be found in American collections of books. Her zeal was, however, greater than her strength. Too close application again affected her eyes; her father's death depressed her spirits; the weakness of advancing age began to oppress her. Nevertheless, she pressed on in spite of all obstacles, finding happiness despite her afflictions, in writing, and, she says, "I completed my work in 1812." It was published in Boston the same year. Six years after, an edition of it was issued in London by the society for promoting Christianity among the Jews. Its English editor commended it highly as a book well calculated to be useful in the special work of the society he represented. No doubt this compliment, which was shown

to be sincere by the publication of the book—a stately octavo volume of 576 pages—was very gratifying to its modest author. It must have cheered her spirits, which were oppressed at times by her increasing infirmities. It was a recognition of her literary ability by highly respectable parties who were well qualified judges, and an assurance that her hope of benefiting the Jews by her labor was likely to be attained.

It is pleasing to know that the latter years of this good lady's "troubled life" were spent in comfort, and in the enjoyment of congenial society, in or near the city of Boston. The extreme delicacy of her health was of course a burden that no measure of human sympathy could remove; but her faith in Holy Writ made her strength equal to that burden, and kept her cheerful until, in 1832, God sent the angel of death to loose the bonds of life. Not long before his messenger came, she said smilingly to a visiting friend:

"I believe some people think I have lived long enough, but I am willing to remain as long as it pleases God to continue my life;" and then, pointing to the landscape without, she added, "How can any body be impatient to quit such a beautiful world?"

It is not often that a person in feeble health, at the age of seventy-six, feels life to be so attractive and earth so beautiful as this latter remark proves Miss Adams did. But her heart was a fountain of cheerfulness. She loved to live, because to her life had always been thought, hope, action. She had loved the beautiful, both in the moral and the material world. She had always aimed at the highest good within reach of her powers. Though excessively timid, even to shyness, she yet, when in society, charmed all she met by her modest simplicity, affectionate tenderness of spirit, and unique, winning manners. Her character, without being eccentric, was original. It is not surprising, therefore, that in old age she found enough of friendship, of sympathy, of good in life, to love it still; albeit she had also sufficient faith in the great All-Father to look to life beyond the grave, if not with the warmth of enthusiastic desire, yet with the calmness of a well-grounded and tranquil hope.

As to her literary ability, it must suffice here to say that, if not of the highest rank, as is not pretended, it was yet sufficient to command the respect of some of the best minds of her times, and to win the attention of many readers. Her books, particularly her "View of Religions," met, if they did not fully

satisfy, a want of her generation, and contributed in their measure to the cause of righteousness. In producing them, as we have seen, under difficulties which few women could have surmounted, she gave her sex an example of perseverance and strength of purpose worthy of imitation. She was, in truth, a noble-minded, honorable, true woman—a pioneer of the numerous ladies who have since contributed to the literature of America, and specially deserving respect, because the productions of her pen were not only free from moral blemishes, but positively pure, adapted, not to injure, nor merely to amuse, but to promote the best interests of mankind.

III.

Elizabeth Prentiss.

"The noblest minds their virtue prove
By pity, sympathy, and love;
These, these are feelings truly fine,
And prove their owner half divine."

—COWPER.

SHAKESPEARE said: "We are born to do benefits." A less distinguished poet wrote,

"The height of virtue is to serve mankind;"

and Beattie, addressing the high-born and the mighty, sings,

"Ye proud, ye selfish, ye severe,
How vain your mask of state!
The good alone have joy sincere,
The good alone are great."

If these sentiments have a right within the realm of truth, then the lady whose deeds are outlined in this sketch may be properly classed among queenly women. Her intellectual gifts entitle her to recog-

nition as equal to very many of the daughters of genius whose pens have won the pleased attention of the world. But her goodness, her devotion to the service of mankind, and her deep sympathy with the children of affliction, place her in a higher rank than those whose fame reposes on literature alone. These gave pleasure to mankind by the airy creations of their imaginations, but Mrs. Prentiss wrought among men as one who deeply felt the truth that we are born, not merely to charm others, but "to do benefits" to all within our reach.

Elizabeth Prentiss was the daughter of the Rev. Dr. Edward Payson, a Congregational clergyman, who was one of the best, most devout men of modern times. She was born in Portland, Maine, October 26, 1818, "the fifth of eight children." Her home was a nest of tender, parental love, in which natural affection was purified and exalted by an uncommon measure of piety, and refined by the graces of intellectual culture.

When a child Elizabeth is described by her husband and biographer* as "a dark-eyed, delicate little creature of sylph-like form, reserved and shy

*"The Life and Letters of Elizabeth Prentiss," author of "Stepping Heavenward," by George L. Prentiss.

in the presence of strangers, of a sweet disposition, and very intense in her sympathies. Her constitution was feeble, and she inherited from her father his high-strung, nervous temperament." She was venturesome, frolicsome, uncommonly susceptible to impressions, and so moved by a spectacle or story of suffering that she trembled with excitement, and was ready to make any possible sacrifice to relieve it. Speaking of her strong sympathies one day, Dr. Payson said, with playful exaggeration:

"She will be in danger some day of marrying a blind man, or a helpless cripple, out of pure sympathy."

Her love for her father was the strongest passion of Elizabeth's child-life. To be with him was her chief delight. His praise was ecstasy, his absence her sorest grief. She seemed to have inherited many of his characteristics, both mental and physical. His piety gave inspiration to her religious affections, and she never forgot the impression made upon her mind by finding him on his face before God in agonizing prayer, when, by mistake, she rushed one day into his study. And when he died in 1827, she being then only nine years old, she tasted her first bitter grief. But though dead, his influence remained with her to the end of her life.

Some three years later Elizabeth joined the visible Church. Young as she was, she comprehended not a little of the nature and duties of Christian discipleship. Early Christian nurture had taught and trained her in the way of faith. And she continued to adorn her profession; first in her mother's house, next in the schools she attended, and then in the wider spheres of adult life.

Notwithstanding the great loss she suffered in the death of her devout father, her youth was passed under conditions highly favorable to the right development of her mind and character. Her mother, who had been reared in the lap of wealth, which had been lost in the fluctuations of her father's mercantile business, was a lady of a noble nature, sympathetic in feeling, kind in act, firm yet gentle in ruling her household, and skillful in adapting her discipline to the peculiarities of her children. The vivacity of her well-informed mind made her a delightful companion, and drew around her a charming circle of cultivated friends. She was withal a superior house-mother, and therefore it was that Elizabeth's youth was passed in a home which, though not rich in material things, was, intellectually, religiously, and in its domestic routine, in no mean degree an ideal home.

To be reared in such a delightful home was a special gift of Providence. Whether Elizabeth should reap its full benefits depended largely upon herself. To her credit be it said, she was spontaneously faithful to her rare opportunity. Sent to the best schools in Portland and, for a season, to one in Ipswich, Massachusetts, she studied with diligence, and made rapid progress. In the home circle, though she had occasional fits of unamiable temper, yet her sparkling wit, her cheerful temper, her warm filial and sisterly affection, made it questionable whether she or her learned sister Louisa was the life of the household. She spent her leisure moments in reading, in rambling near the shores of Casco Bay with some beloved school friend, and in writing poetry. She was also much given to the quiet study of character, as revealed in the spirit, words, and actions of her associates. When only twenty years old she opened a school for girls in her mother's house, and being a "born teacher," was successful in securing the mental improvement and in winning the love of her pupils.

Her first attempts in authorship were contributions to the *Youth's Companion*, of which popular sheet the father of N. P. Willis was then both publisher and editor. In writing, she simply followed

the bent of her genius. Her articles attracted attention, and gave early assurance to her friends that she was destined to win reputation as a writer. Her unique and charming letters to her relatives and chosen friends confirmed this impression, which was justified, as we shall see, by her subsequent career.

Such was the girl-life of Elizabeth Prentiss. It had its trials, arising largely from the death of her father and the struggles for comfortable subsistence on the part of her mother, to which that bereavement gave rise. It had its bright side in the beauty of her mother's strong character, in the spiritual and intellectual culture of her home circle, in the culture and respectability of her associations, and in her educational advantages. In herself, nature and grace combined to furnish her the conditions of happiness and usefulness. The former endowed her with rare gifts of both heart and mind; the latter, from the beginning, moved her to be a truly loyal disciple of the Lord Jesus. Such a girlhood contained the "promise and potency" of a noble womanhood. And to such a womanhood Elizabeth Payson attained, not by the neglect or careless use, but by the earnest improvement of her early opportunities.

When Elizabeth was about twenty-one years of

age, she passed through a spiritual "valley of the shadow of death." As stated above, she had made a profession of discipleship when twelve years old. From that profession she had never fallen away. She had, indeed, been the instrument of winning some of her friends and pupils to Christ in 1837–8. But in 1839–40 a thick cloud of darkness enveloped her soul, and she fell under the power of a morbid moral feeling. Doubt usurped the place of faith, and despair blotted out the visions of hope. Through four dreary months she endured unspeakable agonies of mind, seeing nothing but such vileness in herself and such unapproachable holiness in God as made it seem impossible that he could possibly love her. Her anguish through this gloomy period put both her health and life in peril.

Most earnest Christians who are endowed with highly sensitive consciences, pass through a somewhat similar, though less morbid, state of mental unrest as this, when God lifts them farther into the light of his purity. In that ineffable light they see sin as never before; they look into the hitherto hidden depths of their hearts until they so abhor themselves that it seems impossible to them that God can ever forgive and dwell in them. The purpose of this manifestation is to lead its subject to

look at the immeasurable breadth and depth of the infinite love of God in Christ. Elizabeth realized this when, after listening one Sunday to a sermon on the ability of Christ to save "unto the uttermost," her weary spirit rested itself on the love of Christ. Then, giving herself to admire, to love, to praise him, her turbulent emotions subsided, and were replaced with a holy peace and an exultant love which moved her to put self and every thing else aside, and to devote herself entirely to the service of Christ. This experience, good in itself, though made needlessly severe by that tendency to morbid feeling, which she inherited from her father, lifted her into a higher plane of Christian living; so that, says her biographer, "henceforth to her dying hour His will was the sovereign law of her existence, and her sweetest joy also."

In 1840 we find Elizabeth in Richmond, Virginia, successfully teaching a department in the school of a Mr. Persico, winning the affections both of her fellow-teachers and pupils, living a godly life, delighting her associates by her cheerful spirit and playful manners, and earning the gratitude of the parents of her pupils, because of her influence in elevating the characters of their children. During her stay in Richmond, she suffered very severely

at times from a disease of the heart, which threatened to become chronic; but she was graciously enabled to adorn her profession by her patience under suffering, as she did by her daily demeanor when in health. In August, 1841, "she left Richmond, and flew homeward like a bird to its nest."

Her sister Louisa was married to Professor Hopkins immediately after her arrival in Portland. Her school duties had taxed her strength too severely, and her supersensitive nervous system made self-control difficult, even in the comparative quiet of her maternal home. But, battling bravely against this hindrance, she devoted her time to the diligent performance of home duties, to study, to Christian work, and to the pursuit of still greater measures of God-likeness. With her peculiar temperament, it was scarcely possible to escape from occasional depression of spirits. Nevertheless, her religious progress was obvious, if not to herself, yet to her observing friends. After spending little over a year at home, at the earnest solicitation of Mr. Persico, she returned to her place in his school, where she remained until late in the Summer of 1843. These were trying months, on account of the death of Mrs. Persico, and the subsequent insolvency of the unfortunate widower. She was herself sick part of

the time. Despite all these drawbacks, she did her duty with her wonted cheerfulness, won the hearts of most of her pupils, and when she returned to her home she was, though faint because of being overtasked, yet still pursuing after the highest possible spiritual attainments. At Richmond, as at Portland, she was constantly "stepping heavenward."

A new and sweet experience awaited her, shortly after her return to what she calls her "dear, good home." She found, as she expressed it, "the liberty to love." Mr. George Lewis Prentiss had the good fortune to win her large affections. In his character, tastes, culture, and religious aspirations, she recognized the counterpart to her own, and he became her accepted suitor.

To Miss Payson, says her biographer, "love, after religion, was the holiest and most wonderful reality of life." So passionate was her desire to be truly and strongly loved, and so intense was the love she gave to others, that her betrothal put her spiritual life to a crucial test. Happily, she both saw and felt her danger, saying in a letter to her cousin, "I am tempted to seek my heaven in so loving!" To her betrothed she wrote, "If ever there was a heart tempted to idolatry, to give itself up fully, utterly, with perfect abandonment of every other

hope and interest, to an earthly love, so is mine tempted now." Again writing to her cousin, she says of her lover: "I am *afraid* of love. There is no other medium save that of the happiness of loving and being loved, by which my affections could be effectually turned from divine to earthly things. Am I not, then, on dangerous ground? Yet God mercifully shows me that it is so, and when I think how he has saved me hitherto, through sharp temptations, it seems wicked distrust of him not to feel that he will save me through those to come."

Thus guarding her heart against the excess of earthly love, she was enabled to keep it centered on the Highest. The letters to her betrothed, which, in their ardor, simplicity, and frank confessions, remind one of Meta's letters to Klopstock, are filled with the aspirations of a soul which was aflame with a love for God, still more ardent than that which she felt for him. And thus she solved the problem of giving her betrothed as warm a love as a good man could rightly claim, without taking from her divine Lord that supreme affection which she had already given him. Her spirituality did not, therefore, hinder, but really helped, the legitimate action of her womanly affections.

During the months of her betrothal, she had to

undergo a terrible trial of her physical courage. A tumor in her neck made it necessary that she should suffer the cruel pains of the surgeon's knife. The first operation she endured heroically; but for some reason it was not successful, and she had to submit a second time to its torture. There was no chloroform used at that time to deaden sensibility. During an hour and a quarter she bore up under the agony caused by the knife and needle, with a fortitude which compelled the admiration of Dr. Warren, the skillful operator. The strong will which had kept her feet "stepping heavenward" despite many temptations, made her a heroine when subjected to physical pains kindred to those of martyrdom.

In April, 1845, Miss Payson became the bride of the Rev. George L. Prentiss, and, for the ensuing five years and a half, had her home in New Bedford, Mass., Mr. Prentiss being the newly ordained pastor of the South Trinitarian Church in that busy city. Unlike some ministers' young wives, who abstain from active work in the Church on the idle plea that such work belongs not to them, but to their husbands, Mrs. Prentiss gave herself heartily to such spheres of action as were open to her. With a wisdom beyond her years, she seized on the kind of work for which she was naturally best fitted. Her pecu-

liarly sympathetic nature prepared her to be an angel of mercy to the sick, and to such as, being in trouble, stood in need of sympathy. Accordingly, she made herself the bearer of balm to wounded hearts. Her natural shyness caused her to be reserved in such large companies as she was often invited to meet; but, while shrinking from conversation with elderly people, she would gather around her such young persons as were present, and interest them with an entertaining and instructive story, to which they listened with profit and delight. In private conversation with individuals, she was also very skillful in imparting spiritual comfort. Thus, within the line of her limitations, she was a true helpmeet to her husband in his work. Those of his people who understood her peculiar character loved her, and many not belonging to his parish, attracted by her sprightly manner and her literary accomplishments, sought her acquaintance.

Her married life was happy, not for a short time only, but to the end of her days, though, like all human lives, it was clouded at times by those trials that are common to our race, and by those which grew out of her marked idiosyncrasies. Some of those clouds cast their shadows upon her during her stay at New Bedford. With the mysterious

joys of motherhood there came the cares and weariness of the nursery. With these came also the visitations of the death-angel. Her sister-in-law, Abby L. Prentiss, her mother, and her brother-in-law, S. S. Prentiss, were successively summoned into the land of the departed. To these saddening events, long and severe personal illness was added in the Winter of 1850. Nevertheless, her spiritual life continued to increase, and after her recovery she could write to her absent husband: "I can truly say I have not spent a happier Winter since our marriage, in spite of all my sickness."

In October, 1850, her husband having accepted a call to the Mercer Street Presbyterian Church, New York, she accompanied him to that city, where she found a wider sphere of action, and where her gifts took a direction which crowned her with the honors of a literary reputation, and made her a blessing to thousands. Thirteen years had passed since she had written for the press, when in 1853, under the spur of a sudden impulse, she wrote "Little Susy's Six Birthdays." Time, experience, reading, and a habit of observing the working of her own mind, and of studying the characters of others, of children especially, had stored her mind with facts which her sprightly genius enabled her to readily weave

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into quaint and lively story. Her first work took its place at once in the best class of books for children. Its popularity stimulated her to write, and the public to buy her next production, "The Flower of the Family." "Henry and Bessie" was equally well received, as were also "Susy's Six Teachers," "Susy's Six Servants," and other juvenile books, which her fertile and charming pen subsequently produced. Between 1853 and 1879 she gave twenty-five volumes to the public.

The most important of these productions was "Stepping Heavenward," published in 1869. Though inferior as a literary production to the "Diary of Kitty Trevelyan," of which it constantly reminds one, it was yet immensely popular both in America and Europe, and was, without doubt, very useful to thousands who, like herself, were seeking to be truly and wholly devoted to Christ. It is evidently a transcript of her own experience, an autobiography, not of her exterior but of her *interior* life. She was a keen self-anatomist, and a close observer of the thoughts and conflicts of her own heart. Like her devout and pure-minded father, she was, as already stated, much given to depressed and, at times, even morbid states of feeling. Her sensibilities were exquisitely keen, and naturally

disposed her to attach an exaggerated importance to the words and actions of others. She was, moreover, a close but quiet observer of all whose lives touched hers. She had a rare insight into character, and what she observed she remembered. These qualities of mind and temperament produced an unusually varied religious experience, and an uncommonly clear perception of the minute and trifling incidents which, by being misinterpreted, often disturb the harmonies of family and social life. Hence it came to pass, when Mrs. Prentiss put much of herself and her friends into a book written with dashing sprightliness, with a frankness which is refreshing, and seasoned with a quiet, quaint humor, which ripples over nearly every page, that the religious public read it with avidity. Almost every one found something in it that touched some phase of his own experience, and photographed either his own foibles or those of his acquaintances. To many who were burdened with vexatious household trials it was helpful, because it taught them valuable lessons of patient endurance. Nor was it without value to the spiritual life of many perplexed believers, in that it taught them to take cheerful and trustful views of the Divine goodness. On the other hand, it may be questioned whether

its pictures of a mind excessively given to self-analysis were not calculated to encourage rather than to cure that morbid habit which is so detrimental to healthy spiritual development. Minds naturally inclined to much self-anatomy, or moved to it by errors of creed, are more likely to sink into "the depths" with the Katy of the volume, than to rise with her to those highlands of cheerfulness and hope to which she was accustomed to ascend by sudden bounds, but from which she also descended with a fatal facility which a more equable temperament and a better-grounded Christian faith would have cured. Nevertheless, it is more than probable that "Stepping Heavenward," despite this defect, helped very many more than it hindered. Like all the other works of its author, it breathes a spirit of ethical purity, and its sympathy is not with the selfishness of the earthy, but with the active, self-sacrificing love of the heavenly.

Her biographer, speaking of the motives which impelled her to write books, says: "From first to last she wrote not to get gain, or to win applause, but to do good." And she herself, writing to a cultivated friend who thoroughly appreciated her productions, said: "A woman should not live for, or even desire fame. This is yet more true of a Chris-

tian woman. If I had not steadily suppressed all such ambition, I might have become a sour, disappointed woman, seeing my best work unappreciated. But it has been my wish to

> 'Dare to be little and unknown,
> Seen and loved by God alone.'"

The interpretation of this last sentence is contained in the following statements from her husband's pen. After saying that, with respect to her desire to do good by writing, "she had her reward, good measure, pressed down and running over," he adds: "But of that kind of reward which gratifies literary taste and ambition she had almost none. Her books, even those most admired by the best judges, and which had the widest circulation both at home and abroad, attracted but little attention from the press. The organs of literary intelligence and criticism scarcely noticed them at all. Nor is it known that any attempt was ever made to analyze any of her more striking characters, or to point out the secret of her power and success as a writer."

It need surprise no one who has studied the spirit which animates the "organs of literary intelligence and criticism," to learn that those organs let the writings of Mrs. Prentiss "severely alone." Her spirit and theirs had few things in common.

They would have lauded to the skies a Christless novel with no higher aim than the amusement of its readers; but for books so decidedly spiritual as hers, books in which literary art is held subordinate to religious purpose, they had no praises to bestow. Their editors, or most of them, not being spiritually minded men, could not comprehend them, and in their pride of intellect, probably, tossed them contemptuously aside as "goody-goody" books. But Mrs. Prentiss could richly afford to despise their neglect, in view of the fact that she was constantly in receipt of letters from all parts of the world, written by intelligent persons, to whom her books had given light, comfort, and stimulus in their struggles with sorrow and sin. Had she done no more than to produce her twenty-five books, she would not have lived in vain.

But she did much more. Her beautiful home life, her church work, and her remarkable cheerfulness under much affliction, as represented in her "Life and Letters," are interesting and precious illustrations of the power of Christian faith, by which, though dead, she will yet speak to coming generations, as she did during her life-time to the wide circle in which it was her lot to move. As our outline of the movements of her life was broken

at the point of her entrance upon her career of authorship, we will now take up its thread, and briefly trace the events of her career from 1853 to the termination of her life.

During the five years next succeeding 1853 she appears to have been an almost constant pupil in "the school of suffering." Insomnia, mental depression, and frequent illnesses tried her faith exceedingly. In her most serious sickness she was thought to be dying. She herself supposed that her hour had come, and she joyfully set her heart on entering heaven. She appeared at one time to be unconscious, though she was herself still aware of what was going on around her. Her physician had left a medicine to be given her in case of the extremity she had now reached. She had refused to take it several times, until her husband besought her to do so, expressing a hope that it might save her life.

Thinking that she was at the very gate of bliss, she asked herself, "Will it be wrong for me to refuse to take this medicine?" Her conscience told her it would; and then, strong as was her longing to enter heaven, she finally took the medicine and lived. It was a great disappointment to her to be thus called back from heaven's door to the duties

of life; not that she did not love life, but that she loved heaven more.

In 1858 the failure of the health of her husband compelled him to resign his pastorate, and to spend more than two years in Europe, mostly in Switzerland. As rest was what Mr. Prentiss most needed, they traveled very little, but found their enjoyment in reading, in communing with nature amid the majesty of Alpine scenery, and in quiet fireside fellowship. While in Switzerland, she gave birth to her sixth child. Her enjoyment of these two happy years was sadly broken toward the latter months of her stay by the prostration of her children, first with whooping-cough and then with scarlet fever. Her husband had been invited to preach for a time in the American Chapel at Paris. He had scarcely left her when the fever smote one of the children. The doctor, after seeing the child, informed her that, even though her children might escape death, yet she must make up her mind that it would be at least forty days before she could expect to leave her present abode. This was indeed a gloomy prospect. Yet, with heroic and characteristic courage, she resolved to face it bravely, by herself, and therefore wrote her husband urging him not to give up his engagement in Paris. Then, with true maternal

fortitude, sustained by Christian faith, she gave herself to the task of nursing her fever-stricken children, aided only by the friendly strangers around her. After much weary watching and painful solicitude she had the satisfaction of seeing her children again in good health. In February, 1860, she joined her husband in Paris. The health of Dr. Prentiss being greatly improved, they spent a few months in England, and in September of the same year had the pleasure of greeting old friends at home, and, with their four children, breathing once more the air of their native land.

But neither the joys of friendship nor the air of home could save her from the suffering to which her delicate constitution seemed destined. Through much of the five years succeeding her return from Europe, she was in the furnace of chronic affliction. Insomnia, neuralgia, and other ailments, "aggravated by the frequent illness of her younger children," by the events of the War of the Rebellion, by the death of her beloved sister Louisa and other family bereavements, and by her deep sympathy with her husband in his arduous labors while building a stately church edifice for the new up-town Church which had been organized for him out of his old Mercer Street Church, reduced her to a

state of "almost continuous ill-health." She endured all this in the spirit of sublime submission so characteristically expressed in the following extract from one of her letters:

"It is a part of God's discipline with me to keep me shut up a good deal more than the old Adam in me fancies; but his way is *absolutely perfect*, and I hope I would n't change it in any particular."

In 1870 she was "on the mount;" her physical sufferings were much less, her activity in Christian work greater, and her soul finding almost constant delight in God. The writings of Madame Guyon and Fénélon, the latter especially, contributed much to her elevation of mind. The following year she was once more in the vale of depression, from strong temptation, arising largely out of her reading on the question of personal holiness and its instant attainment by an act of faith. To be holy was her abiding passionate desire. She regarded holiness as a growth, having its roots in an indwelling Christ, secured by habitual faith. But her *standard* was high. When told that she was looking, "not for Christian, but angelic perfection," she replied: "I see no difference in kind. Perfection is perfection, to my mind, and I have always thought it a

dangerous thing for a soul to fancy it had attained it. . . . If the higher life means utter sinlessness, then I shall have to own that I have never had any experience of it."

Evidently she was looking, not for that Christian perfection or perfect love for Christ which is attainable, and to which, judging by her letters, she had already attained, but for that absolutely sinless perfection which is unattainable by fallen, frail, erring human beings. Constant, close, unsparing self-inspection, in presence of that standard of holiness proper, not to fallen, but to unfallen man, or to unsinning angels, caused her quick, sharp-eyed conscience to whip her exquisite sensibilities as with a whip of scorpions. It made her "morbid, stupid," sometimes "wild," melancholy, and even physically sick. Had she but understood that "love is the fulfilling of the law," and that under the Gospel dispensation a disciple whose faith fills his heart with a love for Christ which is dominant, all-absorbing, and productive of ethical obedience, is held to be guiltless of sin, Mrs. Prentiss would have escaped such harassing conflicts as she passed through at this time. The self-questioning which her failure to make this discrimination occasioned, though measurably overcome, had such a depressing

effect on her faith that, says her biographer, "she was, perhaps, never again conscious of that constant spiritual delight which she had once enjoyed. But, if less full of sunshine, her religious life was all the time growing deeper and more fruitful, was centering itself more entirely in Christ, and rising faster heavenward. . . . Her whole being, indeed, seemed to gather new light and sweetness from the sharp discipline she had been passing through." She undesignedly reveals the secret of this sweetness when she writes to a friend, "I think God has provided a way to perfection, and that is 'looking unto Jesus.'" Thus, despite her theories, she was actually gaining holiness through faith.

The above testimony from her husband's pen is amply sustained by her correspondence, as given in her biography, from 1873 to her departure in 1878. Whether in New York, where her husband in 1873, having resigned his parish, had become a professor in the Union Theological Seminary, or in Dorset, Vermont, where she spent the Summer months of the last ten years of her life, she was constantly doing "what she could" for the Lord she loved so deeply and so truly.

In 1874 she was asked to conduct a Bible reading in Dorset. The profit she had derived the

previous Spring from such a reading, conducted by Miss Susan Warner, in New York, moved her to consent to conduct one in Dorset. Writing of its success, she said: "The interest in it did not flag all Summer, and ladies, young and old, came from all directions, not only to the readings, but with tears, to open their hearts to me. Some hitherto worldly ones were among the number."

Encouraged by this success in Dorset, she began Bible readings in New York the ensuing Autumn. Her fascinating manners, her cheerful spirit, her apt illustrations, her wide religious reading, her rich and varied experience, and, above all, the spirituality of her mind, eminently qualified her for this mode of Christian work. She continued it both during her Summer residence in Dorset, and in the Winter at New York, until her last sickness. Describing her last Bible reading service, her biographer says: "There was something very impressive in Mrs. Prentiss's Bible readings. She seemed not unlike her gifted father in the power she possessed of captivating those who heard her. Her manner was perfectly natural, quiet, and even shy; it evidently cost her considerable effort to speak in the presence of so many listeners. She rarely looked round, or even looked up, but a sort of magnetic

influence attracted every eye to *her*, and held all our hearts in breathless attention. Her style was entirely conversational. Her sentences were short, clear as crystal, full of happy turns, and always fresh and to the point. The tones of her voice were peculiar; I scarcely know how to describe them, they had such a fine, *subtle*, womanly quality; were touched—especially at her last reading—with such tenderness and depth of feeling. I only know that as we heard them it was almost as if we were listening to the voice of an angel."

From this last reading, on the 8th of August, 1878, she went home to die. Even while speaking to her spell-bound listeners, the shadow of death was upon her. Six days later, after suffering with uncomplaining patience, and unfaltering triumphing trust, the agony of a fierce, pitiless disease, "she drew one long breath, and all was over."

The sublime victory of her faith can only be understood by considering, not only what it achieved, but also what it overcame in herself. Next to one's natural selfishness, there is, perhaps, no greater hindrance to a life of faith than an inherited tendency to morbid feeling, especially when, as in this noble woman's case, it is associated with extreme moral sensibility. Their joint effect is to surround

the mind with gloomy clouds without, and to torture it within with the sting of guilt, which it imagines so great as to be unpardonable. Besides this tendency, and this exquisite moral sensitiveness, Mrs. Prentiss had a delicate physical constitution, which subjected her to constantly recurring attacks of very painful sickness. She was, moreover, owing to her highly wrought nervous organization, governed by an irresistible impulse to an activity both of mind and body, which levied heavy taxes on her vitality. These were, indeed, formidable obstacles to a life of faith—so formidable that one can not view their conqueror without affectionate admiration. Coarser natures than hers may have to contend against tyrannical proclivities to vices of which her refined spirit never dreamed. But it is not exaggeration to say that it, probably, never, in any human life, required more strenuous resolution, and greater strength of will to live as she did, a sublimely beautiful life, to do a vast amount of varied Christian work, and to soar, if not to the loftiest plane of spiritual thought and feeling, yet to an elevation far above that reached by the average Christian. Assuredly no candid mind can read the "Life and Letters of Elizabeth Prentiss" without exclaiming, "O woman, great was thy faith!"

IV.

Sister Dora.

"Come, child of misfortune! come hither;
I'll weep with thee, tear for tear."
—Moore.

"But then, you see, she was a real princess."

WHO was Sister Dora?

Sister Dora was the daughter of the Rev. Mark Pattison, rector of Hauxwell, Yorkshire, England. Her name was Dorothy Wyndlow Pattison; but when she joined a Protestant sisterhood, who called themselves "Good Samaritans," because they devoted their lives to various works of mercy, she became known as Sister Dora. I will introduce Miss Pattison to the reader as she appeared in the year 1852, at which date she was twenty years of age.

As described by her biographer,* she was then

*"Sister Dora: a Biography," by Margaret Lonsdale.

a young lady of remarkable personal beauty. Her splendid figure was tall, slender, and uncommonly graceful. Her features were nearly perfect in their regularity. Her unusually high and wide forehead indicated the possession of superior mental qualities. Her mouth was small when its full, red lips were closed, but quite wide when she spoke or laughed, and in its corners there lay a half-concealed expression of fun. Her brilliant dark-brown eyes twinkled in "merry sympathy" with her lips. Her head was covered with "dark, tightly curling, brown hair." To these attractions she added a delicate and beautiful complexion, and she was, says Miss Lonsdale, "a fascinating creature to look upon." Her courteous manners and gentle speech harmonized with her beauty, and made her beloved by her friends and popular with all classes in the neighborhood of her home. By many she was often described as "a real princess," because of her sweetness and dignity.

Such was Miss Dorothy Pattison at twenty. Her life up to this period had been spent in her father's rectory, under external conditions every way favorable to the right formation of her character. Hauxwell itself was a small, "intensely quiet" village of only three hundred inhabitants, situated on the

border of extensive moorlands. But the rectory was alive with the stir of twelve children, of whom Dorothy was the youngest but one. She was very delicate when a child, and because of this and of her sweet and even temper, she became "the pet and darling of her elder sisters." But though petted and kept from regular study because of her physical debility, she was neither spoiled in disposition nor dwarfed in mind. She learned as by instinct, and through a habit of minute observation unconsciously formed. What she learned she remembered. If not always a correct, she was yet a precocious reasoner. Her will was strong as iron, but her unselfishness and her desire to please kept her from being willful and obstinate. Instead of meeting opposition to her wishes with sulkiness and ill-temper, she resorted to shrewd but good-natured devices to accomplish her purposes. These devices, though often, perhaps generally, successful, were sometimes blameworthy, and brought her into conflict with the firm discipline of her judicious parents, to whose corrections she submitted, if not with absolute cheerfulness, yet with filial respect.

When fourteen years old Dorothy suffered through several months from painful and dangerous illness. She bore the pain with singular fortitude;

she endured the weariness of slow recovery cheerfully, by constantly looking on the bright side of her case. Thus her sick-chamber was made a school of discipline, in which the best traits of her character were strengthened.

Dorothy's parents were much given to deeds of charity. They trained their children to habits of economy and self-denial, not for the purpose of saving money, but that, by saving and self-denial, they might have more to give to the poor. Dorothy entered into their benevolent spirit quite readily, yet showed as yet no specially warm devotion to charitable work.

After recovering from her long illness, she took to riding much on horseback, and became a good, even a daring, horsewoman. She learned to follow the hounds with her brothers, and to ride across the wild moorlands with a dashing speed, which fairly fascinated the Yorkshire lads who witnessed her feats of courage and independence. Thus, by much riding, and by running, jumping, and other active outdoor games, she at length became a strong, healthy, energetic woman. She was gifted with a flow of animal spirits which seemed unbounded, and with a power of perceiving and enjoying the humorous side of things. These gifts made her the "bright

bonnie maiden" of the rectory, constantly bubbling over with harmless fun. She was, withal, thoughtful, given to meditation, to reflection, and to the silent gathering-up of such facts and principles as were the topics of conversation around the rectory fireside, where culture and religion presided in delightful harmony, making the atmosphere of her home peaceful and every way enjoyable—an absolute contrast to that other Yorkshire rectory in which the gifted Brontë sisters passed their lives.

The activity of Miss Dorothy's nature, and the monotony of life in a wild moorland region, begot a restlessness in her spirit which was extremely painful, and hard to be endured. This feeling was highly stimulated when reports of Florence Nightingale's noble work in the Crimean hospitals reached her. "Let me go to her and be one of her nurses!" she said to her father. "No, my daughter," the good rector wisely replied, "you have had no training for such work. You would be worse than useless to Miss Nightingale. Besides, there is work enough for you here, if you would only think so."

She submitted to her father's decision with filial respect; albeit her craving for a more active life grew inwardly stronger. This inward tempest she so far concealed, however, as still to be the sunshine

of her home, and to share with one of her sisters the duty of tenderly nursing her now invalid mother. It was a pleasing relief to her to visit her elder brother during his vacations, because from her conversations with him she reaped much intellectual quickening. During one of those visits she had a singular dream, in which she saw her mother drawing aside the curtains of her bed, and heard her calling, "Dora, Dora, Dora!" This dream was repeated the following night. The next day a letter informed her of her mother's dangerous sickness. She hastened home and found her mother sick unto death!

It is perhaps impossible to explain the philosophy of this remarkable dream. But the effect of her mother's death on Dora's life is easily comprehended. Her mother's departure left her with slight domestic occupation, and thereby gave her restlessness such full play that her home-life, loving, elevating, and peaceful though it was, became absolutely distasteful to her. She had heard of the Sisterhood of Good Samaritans, and now asked her father's permission to join them. He strongly objected, though he did not absolutely forbid her doing so, since he very properly recognized her liberty to decide freely for herself, seeing that she was

now nearly thirty years of age. She so far respected his wishes as not to join the Sisters at that time, but she did display her self-will to the extent of leaving the home of her childhood and becoming a schoolmistress in the village of Woolston. In this she did "very wrong," as she confessed years after on her death-bed; because instead of biding the opening of a providential path, she made a road for herself out of her proper place into a position which was much below her capabilities, her habits, and early associations. Instead of waiting for Providence to open a door for her entrance to the world beyond her home, she forced an opening with her own hands.

She spent three years in the Woolston School, giving herself wholly to her chosen work. These years, though marked by privations, humiliations, and hardships, were far from being wasted. Her pupils loved her, and profited by her skillful teaching; the people of the place also recognized her as a lady—"a real princess," the working classes called her. One wealthy old gentleman and his wife were so charmed with her, that they begged her to give up her school and live with them. As they had no children, the old gentleman offered to make her his heir. This offer Dora declined. It was not ease,

but active work, that she craved. And this craving grew so morbid that to her teaching by day she added nursing the sick by night. She was constantly haunted by an impression that she was not doing enough. Driven by this unnatural spur, she so overtaxed her vigorous physical powers, that she was at length stricken with pleurisy, and taken to the Home of the Good Samaritans at Redcar, to be nursed. There she recovered her health, but did not rid herself of her morbid feelings, which were rather intensified than diminished by intercourse with the Sisterhood. Hence, in the Autumn of 1864, very much to the regret of all her family, she became a member of the order of Good Samaritans.

This Sisterhood, unlike those of the Papal Church, and of some of the High Church of England orders, took no vows, excepting a pledge of obedience to the clergyman whom they recognized as their pastor, and to the Sister whom he might appoint from their number to fill the office of "Sister in charge," or "Mother Superior." Their work was not contemplative, but secular and active, consisting chiefly in nursing the sick, both in hospitals and in private dwellings. As to the Sisters composing it, they appear to have been mostly

uncultivated women, without much special intellectual training, and in every way inferior to Miss Pattison, who, as we have seen, was a lady by birth, habit, associations, and manners. In every thing but the charitable nature of the work to be done, her entrance among them was a descent from her proper social position. Even her motive, at that particular period of her life, did not much ennoble her act; for just then she was simply seeking to stifle the doubts she had latterly entertained concerning the truth of historical Christianity, by the mental preoccupation involved in toiling to excess in the sick-rooms of the poor. We shall see, by and by, how this motive was subsequently replaced by one which lifted her life up to the highest plane of moral grandeur and Christian nobleness.

These well-meaning but somewhat misjudging Sisters subjected Dora to very severe discipline. She was a neophyte, and they thought she must be taught implicit obedience to their authority. Hence they gave her such servile and, to her, distasteful tasks as making beds, sweeping and scrubbing floors, scouring grates, and cooking in the kitchen of their "Home."

Not very pleasant tasks, truly, for a highly bred lady, nor such as she had expected; yet, when

speaking of this training in after years, she said, "It *was* good for me." Assuredly it must have tended to humble her pride, and subdue her strongly-developed self-will.

This initiatory training was succeeded by her introduction to hospital work, which was better suited to her taste and purposes. The year after she joined the Sisters, she was sent to a hospital containing fourteen beds, in the populous town of Walsall. Scarcely had she begun her appointed task there, before she caught the small-pox from an out-patient. She was very sick, and very poorly cared for by her "Sister" nurses. Nevertheless, she recovered, and resumed her duties.

Walsall was a coal and iron town. Its people mostly wrought in the mines and at the furnaces. Ignorance and vice largely prevailed among them. In Mr. Wesley's day they were given to riot and cruelty, and seem to have retained their disposition to violence to modern times. By some means an impression was made that the "Good Samaritans" were papists, and they proposed to treat them as they had treated the Methodists a century before. A mob stoned their hospital; and one evening Sister Dora, returning from a visit to an out-patient, was struck in the forehead by a stone from the

hand of a lad, who shouted, "There goes one of the sisters of misery!"

Not long after, this violent lad was severely injured in a coal-pit. On being taken to the hospital, he was at once recognized by Dora, and she nursed him with special care. One day during his convalescence, he sobbed, and said:

"Sister, *I* threw that stone at you."

"O," she replied, "did you think I did not know that? Why, I knew you the very first minute you came in at the door."

"What!" he rejoined, "you knew me, and yet have been nursing me like this?"

This was the first practical experience of good returned for evil that young man had ever received, and it filled him with wonder, and with admiration of Sister Dora.

The superiority of Sister Dora to the other members of the Sisterhood was soon obvious to all who had the opportunity of seeing them. When Sir James Simpson, of Edinburgh, visited their Home in search of a suitable nurse, to take care of a partially insane old lady, after seeing all the others, he was introduced to Dora. She was busy, with her sleeves tucked up, making a pudding. But his experienced eye, despite her employment, saw

in her a character that was lacking in all her companions, and he promptly said: "Send me that sister. She is the one for my case."

The event proved that Sir James was not mistaken. Dora managed the half-mad old lady with a degree of skill and tact that soothed her violent moods, and she actually won her affections. In speaking of this service subsequently, Sister Dora said: "I had an uncommonly unpleasant time with that mad old lady."

The cold-hearted tyranny of the probably jealous Sisterhood was shown when Sister Dora, in obedience to their order, was preparing to go to Devonshire, to nurse a private patient. Just then a letter informed her that her father was dangerously sick, and desired to see her. She begged permission to visit him. But her stern Superior replied, "No; you must go at once to Devonshire!"

With an aching heart Sister Dora unwisely sacrificed her filial obligations on the altar of obedience to the Sisterhood. She had scarcely reached her patient's home before she was informed that her father was dead. Then the Sisterhood, ashamed, probably, of their tyranny, or else afraid of public censure, wrote her: "You may attend your father's funeral, if you please."

With pardonable bitterness, Dora replied: "When my father was alive, you would not permit me to go to him. Now he is dead, I no longer care to go."

Sister Dora ought not to have yielded to the cold-hearted tyranny of those so-called Good Samaritans, whose zeal for their order had evidently chilled their finer affections. But in this they only illustrated the tendency of all those organizations, whether male or female, Catholic or Protestant, which require implicit submission to official authority. No human being has a right to make such a surrender of personal freedom to the will of others. The effect of this tyranny on Sister Dora was to weaken her respect for the Sisterhood; and but for the fixedness of her desire to lighten the burdens of the afflicted, she would probably have quitted them at once. Nevertheless, seeing that through them she could best find opportunities to gratify her desire, she, though sore at heart, retained her connection with them a little longer.

She was sorely tempted, too, about this time, to quit the sisters, by an eligible offer of marriage. Her affection for her suitor, though sufficiently deep to produce a severe conflict in her mind with her cherished purpose to devote her life to works of

mercy, was yet not strong enough to overcome it. Marriage and maternity had unusually strong attractions for her affectionate nature, and when reviewing her life, near its close, she said, "If I had to begin life over again I would marry." But the candidate for her hand failed to awaken in her a love strong enough to overcome the passion for a life devoted to active usefulness among the suffering. Had he sought her earlier, while her nursing was as yet only a means of calming somewhat the restlessness of her mind caused by her nascent skepticism, it is likely that she would have become his wife. But by this time her doubts had found their solution in a personal love for Christ. Hence, her motive in nursing was no longer simply a desire to escape unrest, but a noble purpose to serve suffering humanity for the sake of Him who died for her and for the whole world. And but for the counsels of judicious friends, she would most likely at this time have joined one of those High Church Sisterhoods which are bound by vows to lead a single life. As it was, her conflict ended in the rejection of this suitor and her continuance, with renewed zeal, in the work she had chosen, especially in her hospital work at Walsall.

The Walsall mines and iron works, in which accidents to their workers were common occurrences,

created a constant demand for surgical skill in the hospital. Sister Dora perceived this at once, and gave the full power of her penetrative mind to such close observation of the surgical work done by its medical attendants as to acquire a quick and "keen discernment of the character of wounds and of the exact position of fractures." Her courage, self-possession, and tactual skill soon so won the confidence and admiration of the old doctor of the hospital that he gladly gave her all the instruction in his power. The result was that she became a skillful surgeon as well as a nurse, whose tenderness, patience, activity, endurance, and power to inspire the suffering with hopeful courage, could not be excelled. For a time she did her work so unobtrusively as not to attract much attention outside of the hospital and of the homes of the out-door patients. But having contracted a serious sickness in 1866 by her utter and unpardonable disregard of her own health, the general public began to hear of her good deeds through the reports of those to whom she had rendered valuable services. Then many asked, "Who is this Sister Dora of whom we hear so much?" The replies they got led not a few to seek her acquaintance.

Among these was a clergyman of the National

Church, named Richard Twigg, a truly evangelical man, whose instructions and friendship proved unspeakably valuable to her. Indeed, she ascribed her recovery mainly to the prayers of this devout minister, and of his large congregation, whom he had interested in her behalf.

The demands of the growing population of Walsall on the hospital led to the erection of a larger structure in a more healthful situation, over which Sister Dora was duly installed in 1868. Just then the small-pox became epidemic in the town. Nothing daunted by the disgusting and infectious character of this loathsome disease, she labored day and night, in and out of the hospital, for several months. Her excessive labors, her neglect of her own needs of sleep and food, were truly marvelous during the prevalence of this epidemic, and excited general admiration.

One night she was sent for by a poor man who was dying of the worst type of this disease. She found him forsaken by all his relations. Only a neighbor was left to watch him. Finding only a small piece of candle in the house, she gave this woman money to procure more candles, promising to stay with the sufferer until her return. But the woman spent the money for drink, and did not

reappear with the needed candles. Sister Dora continued by the poor creature's bedside. Presently he raised himself up in his bed as far as his departing strength permitted and said: "Sister, kiss me before I die!" It was a loathsome task, but Dora, thinking more of the poor man's feelings than of herself, put her arms around him and kissed him! The next moment the candle went out. "Do n't leave me, Sister, while I live," groaned the dying man. It was then past midnight, but she remained beside him until he died. Even then she kept dreary watch in the darkness, fearing that, though silent and cold, the poor creature might still be alive. When the day dawned she groped her way to the door and called in the neighbors. Surely she was a ministering angel to that deserted man!

The tenderness of Dora's nature moved her to closely study "what is called conservative surgery." The doctors of the hospital, when they saw a bruised and mangled limb, were but too apt to decide, without much hesitation, on its amputation. Dora, knowing that the loss of limb by a miner or iron-founder meant future poverty both for the man and his family, always urged the surgeons to save the limb if at all possible. Here is a typical case of her action in this direction: A fine, healthy young man was

brought to the hospital one night with an arm badly crushed by a machine. The doctor said, peremptorily:

"Nothing can save that arm! It must be cut off at once."

The man groaned deeply. Sister Dora's sympathies were moved. She scanned the mangled limb with a critical eye, and thought it could be saved. The young man, as if reading her thoughts, cried piteously:

"O, Sister! save my arm for me; it 's my right arm.

Turning to the surgeon, Dora said, "I believe I can save this arm if you will let me try."

"Are you mad?" retorted the doctor, angrily. "I tell you it 's an impossibility. Mortification will soon set in. Nothing but amputation can save his life."

Dora, turning to the sufferer, asked: "Are you willing I should try to save your arm, my man?"

The man joyfully consented to accept the risk. The doctor was now in as much passion as he could be with this wonderful woman, whom he greatly admired, and walked away, saying: "Well, mind, it 's your arm! If you choose to have the young man's death on your conscience, I shall not interfere.

I wash my hands of him. Do n't think I am going to help you."

Dora had often disagreed with the doctor, and results had usually justified her opinion. In this case she used her utmost skill during the ensuing three weeks. Then she said to the doctor, "Come and see my work!"

Scarcely willing to be proved wrong by a woman who was under his personal direction, he somewhat sullenly complied. Dora removed the bandages, and showed him the arm, no longer mangled, but straight and healthy. Astonished at this unexpected sight, he exclaimed: "Why, you have saved it! It will be useful to him for many a long year." Then calling in the rest of his medical staff, he proudly bade them look at the work of his pupil, and learn from it "what might be done."

Dora was gratified. She loved approbation, especially when she knew it to be deserved. More precious, however, to her was the young man's gratitude, and the influence this and other feats of nursing skill gave her, not only with her medical superior, but also with the trustees of the hospital. By their permission, she now undertook to take lady pupils, to train in the hospital as surgical nurses. This work did not, probably, add as much

to her burdens as to her responsibilities, because the lady pupils, while under her instruction, by acting as nurses and assistants, relieved her of other portions of her too heavy duties.

Sister Dora had large intellectual capacities which, despite her constant preoccupation, craved sympathy with some kindred spirit. Her patients mostly belonged to the uncultivated classes; her lady pupils were not sufficiently long with her—were not, perhaps, of an intellectual standard high enough to satisfy her craving; her pastor, though very helpful to the religious side of her life, could not, with the many claims upon his time, minister to her mental wants; and she was too fully occupied to find what she needed in the best social circles of Walsall. This sense of intellectual isolation prepared her to fall into a snare, which came very near working a complete, perhaps an unhappy, change in her career. This snare was no other than a new suitor for her hand. A gentleman intellectually her superior, fitted in all but one feature of his character to meet the demands of both her mind and heart, became strongly attached to her, and offered to make her his wife. Dora reciprocated his affection with all the ardor of her sympathetic nature. Her love became a passion. She

engaged herself to him, and was on the point of exchanging her chosen vocation for the more attractive duties of married life.

This was very natural, and not in itself improper. Nay, it was in many ways desirable. But the friend whose counsels had kept her from giving her hand to a previous suitor, ventured to protest against her present passion. "Your affianced," he pleaded, "is a *pronounced skeptic*. You are bound to your God by the ties of faith and love. Can you retain your faith if you become the wife of an infidel? If you can, will not your differences on this most momentous of all subjects, breed discord between you?

Dora pondered these weighty questions until, convinced that her love to Christ was infinitely more important, both to her personal happiness and to her influence over others, than her passionate love for this cultivated infidel, she withdrew from her engagement. This was a great, a really noble sacrifice. It cost her a mental struggle so intensely agonizing that it made her the prey of a fit of sickness which lasted a month, and brought her to the very door of death. At least, the good old hospital doctor thought she was near her end when he left the institution one day, saying,

with tears, "If Sister Dora dies, I'll never enter these doors again!"

But Sister Dora did not die. Her strong will, with skillful treatment, and the blessing of God, restored her to health, and to the work she loved.

Were it not authentically vouched, the story of Sister Dora's work, both in and out of the hospital, would be deemed incredible. Her capacity of working incessantly all day, and of watching four or five nights in succession, was such as few, either men or women, possess. Her ability as a tender nurse, her surgical skill in reducing a fracture, tying an artery, and dressing a wound, is rarely excelled, even by professional surgeons. Her versatility, by which she could turn from managing the sick wards to directing the catering departments of the establishment, was remarkable; her power to command the respect of the rude, often vile, men who were constantly placed under her care, was such as few men or women possess; and the magnetism by which she inspired her patients with fortitude under terrible surgical operations, or when their wounds, caused by burning and scalding, were dressed, and with cheerfulness under the weariness of long-continued weakness and pain, was also wonderful. But besides all these qualities, and

the burden of her onerous hospital duties, she engaged after 1873 in missionary work. She had previously regarded her nursing as a ministration to Christ's sick and suffering ones, and had constantly prayed for his blessing on her nursing. But when, in 1873, a special meeting was held in Walsall for the spiritual welfare of the people, she went out among them, and persuaded many to attend the services. She also attended prayer-meetings established by her pastor, the liberal-minded Mr. Twigg; and after going to Birmingham, for the purpose of studying the methods of Moody and Sankey, she taught her hospital patients to sing the Sankey hymns; and at the close of the Sunday afternoon hospital services, conducted by a clergyman, she addressed them in her own peculiar and effective manner. "I try to put myself," she said, "in the place of these poor men, to see with their eyes, and to feel their wants and difficulties as if they were my own, and then God puts into my heart the words which will reach their hearts." Is it surprising that by this simple process, and by her habits of constant Bible study, she became wise to win souls? She always carried a small Bible in her pocket, and when found reading it one day by one of her lady pupils, "the expression on her face,"

said this eye-witness, "was indescribable; it was like nothing I had ever seen on a human face before—unearthly is the word I must use for it." Evidently Sister Dora had learned to see the face and heart of her Lord in his Word. To her, reading the Bible was communing with God.

In 1874 Sister Dora dissolved her connection with the "Good Samaritans," saying, when asked her reason for this act, "I am a woman, and not a piece of furniture!" The Sisterhood then wrote the committee that they would no longer be responsible for the nursing at the Walsall hospital. But the committee, esteeming Sister Dora's services as of higher value to them than those of the whole Sisterhood, requested her to assume its entire charge, to which she gladly assented, seeing that it was only formally accepting a responsibility which she had practically borne for several years.

Perhaps Dora's crowning act of self-denial was her offer, in 1875, to take charge of the Epidemic Hospital, which had been built after the visitation of small-pox suffered by the Walsall people in 1868. Dora knew that the poor would not send their sick to such a hospital if conducted by ordinary nurses. She knew, too, as did the authorities of the city, that if she took it in charge they would willingly

trust their friends to her care. It was a daring, a revolting, a perilous task to isolate herself from the community, and to shut herself up with small-pox patients, for an indefinite time. It was too much to ask her to do it, for was it not going into the jaws of death? But, seeing that she might thereby prevent the town from being ravaged by this disgusting and deadly pestilence, and so save many lives, she did not wait to be asked; but, after finding that she could safely trust her own hospital to the care of three lady pupils, she heroically volunteered to undertake it. Her offer was gladly accepted. The public breathed more freely, as men and women went about saying to one another, "Sister Dora is going to the Epidemic Hospital!" O, Christ-like Sister Dora!

It is a pity that this Christly act was marred by Dora's jealousy lest, during her absence from her post, some one of her lady pupils should display qualities that might rival her own. To prevent this, instead of placing one of them in charge, she left, simply bidding them divide its duties among themselves. The result, as she must have anticipated, was disagreement and inefficiency. The pride she took in her acknowledged superiority as a nurse was the root of her jealousy. It was a spot on the

otherwise grand decision of Dora's love for humanity and Christ, which led her to immure herself within the walls of the Epidemic Hospital. Alas, poor human nature!

When Dora stood on the steps of the Epidemic Hospital, a great dread of what she was to encounter there filled her heart. Shivering with a strange spasm of terror, she exclaimed:

"O, take me back! I can not endure this dreadful place! I had no idea what it would be like when I said I would come here."

Her companion, the physician of the hospital, only replied, "Come in!" She followed him. The internal arrangements of the building at once arrested her attention. Her momentary fear vanished, and she went quietly to her work.

Dora spent six months in that dreadful lazar-house, among the victims of the repulsive epidemic, with no one to assist her except an old porter and some poor women employed to do the washing of the patients. The toil she endured, the scenes she witnessed, the courage she displayed, the skill with which she fought the disease, the cheerfulness with which she encouraged the sufferers, and the wonderful fortitude which kept her at her post, can neither be described nor even imagined. Never-

theless, sustained by her indomitable will, and by the grace of the Lord Jesus, she lived to see the last small-pox patient pass out from her care, to see the gates of the building closed, and to resume her old place in the regular hospital.

The limits of this sketch forbid further details of the work of this really wonderful woman. It must, therefore, suffice to add that she continued her career as nurse and Christian worker, chiefly at Walsall, with unabated zeal and self-devotion, winning, as usual, the affections of even her rudest and vilest patients, until, in 1877, she began to feel her masculine strength slightly declining. "What can be the cause?" she asked herself. Unable to answer this question, she consulted Mr. Crompton, a physician who was her personal friend. The result of his examination was startling. It brought her face to face with death; for, as he assured her, she had a cancer which, said he, "must ultimately destroy your life!"

Mr. Crompton proposed a surgical operation. "It may prolong your life somewhat," he said. But Dora hesitated. She knew the uncertainty of the treatment proposed. Finally she said:

"No, I will allow the disease to take its natural course. But promise me to keep my condition a

secret. If my friends find it out, they will not permit me to keep on working, as I wish to do to the last."

Dr. Crompton gave the required promise, and Dora returned to her duties, knowing that her death-sentence was written on her person. She then prayerfully reviewed her past life, and saw in it, as she thought, so much work left undone, so many wasted opportunities, so much time unredeemed, that she resolved to give all the financial resources she had inherited from her father, with the whole energy of her soul and body, to make the very utmost of every moment still left her. Besides this motive for keeping her disease a secret, she shrunk from being an object of pity. She, who could pity others and give them her overflowing sympathy, could not endure to be herself pitied. Perhaps there was a little pride in this shrinking from pity and sympathy, or it may be she was content with the sympathy of Him in whose steps she was so treading, that common opinion was voiced by one of her friends, who said, after her death, "Sister Dora was as like the Lord Jesus as any human creature could be."

Dora visited the Isle of Man in the Summer of 1878, to see some of her nieces. She then went to

Paris to the Exhibition, and afterwards to London, at both of which places she gave close attention to medical and surgical questions. In appearance she was still a beautiful, healthful lady; in reality she was slowly approaching the crisis of her disease. In October she wrote to a clerical friend: "The decree has gone forth, 'Sister, put thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live.' There is only Mount Calvary to climb, by the ladder of sickness. I have not had two hours' sleep for four days and nights; but in the midst of the fiery furnace there was a form like unto the Son of God."

Then came eleven weeks of exquisite suffering, during which she was lovingly nursed by her Walsall friends, and visited by many leading citizens of the place. On the 24th of December, replying to a friend who had remarked, "Our blessed Lord is standing at the gates of heaven to open them for you," she said: "I see him there; the gates are opened wide."

A little later her pain subsided, and Sister Dora's life ebbed quietly away, and her escaped spirit swelled the glorified throng, and was forever with her Lord.

Dora's death filled all Walsall with genuine grief. The whole city was deeply moved, and

almost its entire population, from its civic officers to its poor, its halt, and its maimed, was present at her burial. Never did any city pay greater honor to one of its dead than Walsall to the remains of Sister Dora.

There was much in Sister Dora's life that can not be, perhaps ought not to be, imitated by any other woman. Her idiosyncrasies were peculiarly her own. What woman ever combined so much masculine physical strength with so much feminine grace and beauty? or so much manly force of character with so much womanly delicacy? or so much broad, not to say coarse, humor with so much purity of feeling and language? or so much self-forgetfulness in the presence of the many inevitable indelicacies of hospital practice with so much perfect modesty? It is not her idiosyncrasies, therefore, that the Christian woman is to aspire to imitate, but only her spirit of self-sacrifice. Dora gave all she had to the service of Christ and humanity. My lady reader can give *all she has* to the same high service. Dora spent herself in a way suited to her peculiar endowments. The lady reader can spend her life in a way suited to her own gifts. The voice of duty does not call any lady, young or old, to tread paths which nature has unfitted her to walk

in, but only to consecrate whatever gifts she has to the Master's service. When our dear Lord gave judgment concerning Mary's devotion, he did not say, She hath done what Deborah or Elizabeth or Salome did, but, "She hath done *what she could.*" And this is duty's call to every daughter of the Church—so to act that, at her death, the Eternal Judge may say of her, "She hath done what she could."

V.

Mary Lamb.

"For not uninterested the dear maid
I've viewed; her soul affectionate yet wise;
Her polished wit as mild as lambent glories
That play around a sainted infant's head."

—COLERIDGE.

MARY ANNE LAMB is ranked among famous women, not because of her contributions to literature, though they were by no means despicable, as will be shown, but because of her sisterly devotion to her brother Charles, whose genial and witty essays gave him, as the reader knows, a high place among the literary celebrities of his times. The story of the love of this brother and sister probably has no parallel in the lives of men and women. The tragic circumstances which called it into activity invest it with rare interest, and cause its marvelous beauty to stand out so conspic-

uously as to compel the admiration of every class of readers. In both it was a love of sacrifice, and it may be difficult to determine which made the greater sacrifice for the other's sake. Without attempting to solve this problem, one may certainly affirm that Mary was a true sister in the original sense of that familiar word, which, as etymologists teach, signifies, "she who pleases or consoles." The love of Antigone for her brothers, as presented by Sophocles in his famous tragedy, was more than equaled in depth and beauty by the love of Mary Lamb for her wonderfully affectionate brother.

Miss Lamb was born in London on the 3d of December, 1764. She was the third of a family of seven children born to her father, who was a barrister's clerk. Of these, four died in early childhood, leaving John, the eldest, Mary, and Charles, the youngest of the seven, to grow to maturity.

Mary was a shy, sensitive, nervous, affectionate child, in whom a close observer might have discerned symptoms of a brain likely to be disordered by a tendency to insanity, inherited from her father's ancestors. It was her misfortune that her mother, though kind, and even affectionate, did not, probably could not, comprehend her peculiar need of being loved with an affection as demonstrative as

her own. Hence, instead of responding to the child's fond words and caresses with sympathetic warmth, she repelled her, if not with sharp words, yet with a coldness which chilled her heart.

Mary's home, which, though humble, was above want, was still more unfitted to her needs because of a maiden aunt who dwelt in it, and whose odd ways, "witch-like mutterings and mumblings," and uncanny glances, made her an object of dread to the shrinking maiden, as she was also to her brother Charles. Her school education was limited to instruction in reading, writing, and "ciphering," by "a gentle usher" named Starkey. The library of Mr. Salt, her father's employer, in which she was suffered "to browse" at will, doubtless contributed to the unfolding of her mind, as it did also, by the unsuitable books it contained, to the birth of fancies and feelings which nourished the seeds of insanity sown by nature in her susceptible spirit. Occasional visits to her maternal grandmother and other relatives, living in the country, also had their influence, both good and ill, in forming her character.

When Mary was full ten years old, her brother Charles was born. He was "a weakly but very pretty babe," and his coming not only made Mary's life less lonely, but, as she was old enough to act

the part of a nurse, her care of him, by diverting her mind from its uncanny fancies, had a health-giving effect upon her young soul. His nature, as he grew up, proved to be very like her own. His mind responded to her intelligence, and his heart reciprocated her strong affection. They were inseparable companions until, in 1782, when he was seven years old, and a handsome boy with curling, black hair, brown complexion, and glittering eyes, she had to lose his daily companionship because of his admission to Christ's Hospital. But, though he was a "Blue-coat boy," his home was near at hand, and his association with his sister, though interrupted, was by no means broken up.

Seven years in Christ's Hospital had to suffice for Charles Lamb's school education. The helplessness and infirmities of old age had overtaken their parents, and made it necessary for him and Mary to undertake, at least in part, the support of their now mentally incompetent father, and their physically broken down mother. Mary had already begun her part, by "taking in millinery work," which she continued to do for eleven years, or until she was thirty-two years old. Charles now put his shoulder beneath the family burden, by accepting a clerk's desk, procured for him by his elder brother,

the selfish John, in the South Sea House. Then, in the happy fellowship of love and self-sacrificing toil, this loving brother and sister traveled uncomplainingly along the humble path in which their lots were cast.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, though two years older than Lamb, had become acquainted with him at Christ's Hospital, where Lamb had almost worshiped the rising genius of the future philosopher. After entering the South Sea House, the two old school-mates often met at a tavern known as the "Salutation and Cat." There their acquaintanceship ripened into friendship, and Lamb introduced Coleridge to his own modest home, and to his sister. In the literary chitchat with which they enlivened the evening hours, Coleridge learned to perceive the fine qualities of Mary's mind and heart, and became the firm friend of both.

But the shadow of a lifelong affliction fell across the path of this unfortunate, devoted brother and sister in the year 1795. Crossed in an affection he had cherished for a young lady, and oppressed with the cares of family life forced prematurely upon him, poor Lamb's reason reeled, and for six weeks he became an inmate of an insane asylum. He had not been long restored before his brother John,

who, when well, had not offered to assist them, though abundantly able, having met with an accident, sought the nursing he required in the modest home of Charles and his sister. The nursing was cheerfully given, but it cost them a fearful price. Mary, then thirty-two years old, worn down with overmuch care, excessive needlework, and incessant nursing of her crippled mother, to which the watching of her elder brother was superadded, fell into a state of "extreme nervous misery." Symptoms of the family madness appearing one morning, Charles, on his way to his office, requested a physician to call and prescribe for Mary. The doctor was, unfortunately, out. Mary's symptoms grew worse in the afternoon, when she was suddenly seized with frenzy. Grasping a knife, she rushed upon her sewing-girl with murderous intent. The girl fled before her. Mary pursued her. Her mother hastily interposed, and the blow aimed at the affrighted girl fell upon the mother and killed her instantly! Charles entered the room only in time to snatch the knife from the hand of his maniac sister. She was utterly unconscious of what she had done, and Charles, with a sorrow-stricken, foreboding heart, placed her within the walls of an asylum for the insane.

This double tragedy almost unnerved the sensitive Charles. But his friend Coleridge cheered him with letters full of beauty, wisdom, and religious consolations. He seems also to have sought strength and healing in prayer. Unlike his brother, who refused to act a brother's part, and even censured him for refusing to let their sister be sent by the civic authorities to a public hospital for life, Charles rose nobly to the demands of the occasion. Though his entire income—he was by this time a clerk in the India House—was but nine hundred dollars per annum, and it would require one-third of that sum to pay Mary's expenses in the asylum, yet he right manfully and nobly determined to give up his long-cherished hope of marrying "the fair-haired maid" whom he loved, and to take upon himself the support of his infirm father and insane sister.

This determination involved a measure of self-sacrifice few brothers would be willing to make. But Charles knew that Mary was worthy of it. He loved her, not only because she was his sister, but also because he believed her to be "uniformly great and amiable. Of all the people I ever saw in the world," he said, with proud affection, "my poor sister was most and thoroughly devoid of the least tincture of selfishness."

But what of Mary after her terrible deed? She was not long in the asylum before she was restored, says Charles, "to her senses, and to a dreadful sense and recollection of what had passed," which was awful to her mind, but tempered with religious resignation. "Even then she was happily able to discriminate between a deed committed in a transient fit of frenzy, and the terrible guilt of a mother's murder. . . . She had a most affectionate and tender concern for what had happened." She grieved, but there was no sting of guilt in her grief, and she found comfort in the thought that she had always loved her mother with a deep and tender affection, which had been "but half requited," and that it was "the long years of daily and nightly devotion to her" which had developed the madness that led to the sad catastrophe. No wonder, therefore, that the recollection of her mother's death awakened no accusing voice in her conscience, no fear as to her accountability for the unintentional deed. Very touchingly she wrote to Charles on this point, saying: "I have no bad, terrifying dreams. At midnight, when I happen to awake, . . . with the noise of the poor mad people around me, I have no fear. The spirit of my mother seems to descend and smile upon me and bid me live to enjoy the life and

reason which the Almighty has given me." Had she been an unloving, disobedient daughter, could such thoughts have arisen to comfort her? Had there been any unfilial acts in her past, would they not have reappeared in her memory and dreams as accusing specters? And what was the mother's smile she saw in her nightly visions but a bright effulgence from that complete and loving observance of a daughter's obligations which she had rendered unceasingly up to the hour of her insanity?

It is illustrative of Mary's charming disposition that she won, not the respect and indulgence merely, but the love of the keepers of the asylum. It was thought prudent to detain her within its walls some time after her reason was restored, and, says Charles, "she set herself with characteristic sweetness to make the best of life in a private lunatic asylum." Of her keepers he adds, "They love her and she loves them, and makes herself very useful to them."

In the Spring of 1797 Mary was thought to be sufficiently restored to quit the asylum. Charles, unwilling to burden her with the care of their helpless father, provided her with a lodging, where he spent many of his evenings enjoying her intelligent companionship, and inwardly rejoicing over his hope that she would not be insane again. Vain hope!

Only a few months later she was again in the asylum. Poor Charles was in the depths of disappointment and dejection, dreading lest it was his sister's doom to live "perpetually on the brink of madness."

In 1799 the death of Lamb's father, and the apparent recovery of Mary, made it practicable for him to take her home. "Mary," he wrote, "was never in better health and spirits than now." Shortly after this she made her first attempt at verse-making, by producing a playful little epigram entitled "Helen," which Charles sent to Coleridge in great glee, claiming it to be "very elegant and very original." He subsequently published it in the first collected edition of his works.

About this period of her life Mary began to go into society with her brother, and after setting up their household gods at No. 16 Mitre Court, to gather around their hospitable supper-table "an ever-lengthened succession of friends, cronies, and acquaintances," which included many brilliant conversationists and literary celebrities. Mary, during her periods of sanity, bore herself, both in these home-gatherings and in the literary parties at which she and her brother were guests, with such habitual serenity of demeanor that, says Talfourd, "little could any one observing Miss Lamb guess the calamity

which frightfully checkered her life." De Quincey called her "that Madonna-like lady." In person she was under the middle-size. Her very placid features were well formed; her changeful eyes were described by Procter as "gray and intelligent," and by Miss Cowden Clarke as "brown, soft, and penetrating." Miss Clarke also says that "her smile was winning in the extreme." Her manners were quiet and easy. Her voice was soft and persuasive, with an emotional stress in breathing which gave a charm to her reading of poetry, and a captivating earnestness. She talked sparingly, but her speech was "quaint and pleasant." These external characteristics were the visible expressions of a mind richly endowed with clear and quick perceptions, sound judgment, strong reasoning powers, and exceeding sweetness of disposition. Her culture had been derived, not from scholastic training, but from much and varied reading. She was not, therefore, an unnoticed cipher when in the society of her brother's literary associates, but an agreeable companion, who contributed, by her sensible appreciation of their wit and wisdom, to their entertainment. Hazlitt used to say of her, "I never met with a woman who could reason, and I have met with only one thoroughly reasonable, and that was Mary

Lamb;" a remark, by the way, as unfair, at least to many women, as "it was commendatory of Mary Lamb."

When Mary's constantly recurring fits of madness were coming on, her speech, though rambling and fantastic, was, as Mrs. Gilchrist informs us, sometimes brilliant, beautiful, and courtly, "as if the finest elements of her mind had been shaken into fantastic combinations, like those of a kaleidoscope."

Her attacks were usually brought on by excitement of any kind, or by excessive fatigue. First sleeplessness, then restlessness, sometimes stupor, were their premonitory symptoms. Fully aware of her liability to them, she was accustomed, when starting on a holiday trip, which necessarily involved fatigue, to pack a strait-waistcoat with her own hands. When warned by her feelings that her mind was about to lose control of itself, she would gently and sadly intimate the fact to her brother. Reluctant to give publicity to his great affliction, poor Lamb would ask leave of absence from his office, as if for a day's excursion. Then, taking Mary's hand, he would walk with her to the asylum. Mr. Charles Lloyd, one of their intimate friends, met them one day thus slowly walking

together along a footpath in Hoxton Fields, both weeping bitterly. On joining them they told him that they were on their way to the asylum, to which she so often resorted for treatment. What a sad, yet beautiful spectacle! Sad, because of the suffering; beautiful, because of the depth and tenderness of the affection it displayed.

Lamb's tender anxiety led him to be always watching his sister. Even when in his most convivial moods, if he saw a languid look in her sweet face, he would turn from his companions to her, and ask, "Mary, does your head ache? Do you feel unwell?" If it chanced that the conversation turned to exciting events, he would change its current with a laughable jest or a mirth-provoking pun. On one occasion, when he overheard a lady speaking to her so earnestly in praise of himself, that Mary was moved to lay her hand upon the eulogist's shoulder, he suddenly stepped to them and said:

"Come, come, we must not talk sentimentally!" and then he began to rattle off some of his gayest nonsense.

The strain of this constant anxiety on the brother's part was terrible. It made him nervous, irritable, melancholy at times, and wrote deep lines

of suffering on his expressive countenance, which said Coleridge, "went to the heart of his friends." But it never made him bitter, morose, morbid, or violent. When his elastic spirit rose from the depth of its depression, its reaction was seen by his friends in bursts of wild, fantastic gayety, which made him a problem to strangers and a charming mystery to his friends. Its most serious effect on him was to drive him to the free use of intoxicating drinks. The habits of society were all against him in this temptation; and while the warmest admirers of this much-tried, gentle soul can not exonerate him from blame for this weakness, they yet mingle a large proportion of pity with their regretful censure.

In 1802 we find Mary sufficiently vigorous to accompany her brother to the "Lakes," on a visit to Coleridge, whose warm sympathies with both were as precious ointment poured forth. On their return they found Wordsworth and his sister in London, they having just returned from a trip to the Continent. Dorothy Wordsworth was a woman after Mary's own heart, at least so far as their love for their respective brothers was concerned. Circumstances excepted, Dorothy was to Wordsworth what Mary was to Lamb. Both were examples of rare and beautiful sisterly devotion.

Poverty, though it never created genius, has often been a spur to its development where it lay idle or latent. In the case of Mary Lamb, who, if not a genius, was highly gifted with talent, it did this latter office in that the insufficiency of her brother's income to meet their growing wants, despite her rare economical abilities, moved her to enter the field of authorship. Her malady forbade close mental application. Yet during her lucid interval in 1806 she undertook to transform fourteen of Shakespeare's plays into stories for children. Her fondness for children furnished her inspiration for this task; her clear perceptive qualities, her shrewdness, and her tact fitted her to do it well. Lamb who, to her fourteen dramas, added six tragedies, assisted and encouraged her. His fun made their work seem like play at times, as appears by the following extract from one of her letters to a lady friend:

"You would like to see us," she writes, "as we often sit writing at one table (but not on one cushion), sitting like Hermia and Helena in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' or rather like an old literary Darby and Joan, I taking snuff, and he groaning all the while, and saying he can make nothing of it, which he always says till he has finished, and then finds out he has made something of it."

In one of Lamb's letters we find him laughingly saying: "Mary begins to think Shakespeare must have wanted imagination! I flatter her with telling how well such and such a play is done."

Thus cheered and encouraged, this afflicted lady, who must have written in hourly apprehension of a visitation of her dreadful malady, completed her contract. Her "Tales from Shakespeare," duly, though not satisfactorily, illustrated, appeared in the book market. "Their success," says Mrs. Gilchrist, "was decisive and complete. New editions were called for," and even now "hardly a year passes but a new edition is called for" in England; albeit they are but little known in America.

Mary's next literary venture was a volume of ten short tales for children, entitled "Mrs. Leicester's School." Of these Charles was the author of three. These simple stories were praised with "whimsical extravagance" by Landor; and Coleridge, scarcely less extravagant, said: "It at once soothes and amuses me to think—nay, to know—that the time will come when this little volume of my dear, well-nigh oldest friend, Mary Lamb, will be not only enjoyed, but acknowledged as a rich jewel in the treasury of our permanent English literature." These opinions were inspired more by friendly

feeling than by unbiased critical judgment. There was, nevertheless, a measure of truth in them which the public acknowledged by rapidly buying up the first edition, and calling for several more during the ensuing five years. The volume is still found in the English book-market.

To the mental strain caused by the composition of these stories, the fatigue of two removals was added in 1809; and poor Mary was forced to abandon her household gods and her writing-desk, and submit once more to the necessary restraints of the mad-house.

"What sad, large pieces," exclaimed her distressed brother, "it cuts out of life!—out of *her* life, who is getting rather old [Mary was then forty-five], and we may not have many years to live together. I bear it worse than ever I did."

"Poetry for Children, Entirely Original," was the title of a volume of little poems, "the joint production of Mary and me," as Lamb called it. It was published in the Summer of 1809, probably while Mary was crushed beneath her affliction. This also had a large sale, but "ultimately dropped out of sight." It was Mary's last book, though she subsequently wrote occasionally for the periodicals of the day. Neither these poems, nor her "Stories"

and "Tales," nor all together, entitle her to rank with women of genius. But taking her lack of early education, the unfavorable circumstances in which her youth and early womanhood were passed, and the mental derangements to which she was so long subjected, into account, they suggest, if they do not amply prove, that with favorable opportunities for mental culture, and with a mind unimpaired by hereditary madness, she would have won no mean degree of celebrity in the literary world.

As this is only a sketch, not a biography, further space can not be given to the details of Mary's later life. It would be interesting to accompany her and Charles to the various homes they occupied, to share the pleasures of their holiday trips, to peruse her letters, to sit with them in the gatherings of their many literary friends at their famous evening supper parties where, if there was less learning, stateliness, and splendor than at the much celebrated assemblies of Holland House, there was equal intellectual brightness and no less genial wit; albeit, it must be confessed that too much of their joviality owed its inspiration to flagons of strong ale, and tumblers of brandy and water; but it must suffice us in this paper to sum up the events of their subsequent years in a few words.

Mary never freed herself from the assaults of her hereditary foe. After 1824, a year which was marked by unusual freedom from his visitations, she was more and more frequently compelled to take up her abode with the unfortunate victims of mental distraction. The duration of her attacks became longer, until in 1833, Lamb wrote Wordsworth: "Half her life she is dead to me, and the other half is made anxious with fears and lookings forward to the next shock." In 1834 Charles died of erysipelas, brought on by an accidental fall which wounded his face. At the time of his departure, though not actually insane, Mary's mind was so far under a cloud as not to clearly comprehend what a loss had befallen her. And she remained in that condition for nearly a year after he had passed away. Thus, for once, her disease was her friend in a time of her great need.

When again in her right mind, and made fully aware that her brother was in the grave, she took in the sad fact with calmness. Nevertheless "she refused to leave Edmonton. *He* was there asleep in the old church-yard, beneath the turf near which they had stood together, and had selected for a resting-place. To this spot she used when well to stroll out mournfully in the evening; and to this

spot she would contrive to lead any friend who came in on Summer evenings to tea, and went out with her afterward for a walk." His very grave seemed to tranquillize her feelings. Thirteen years after her brother's death, on the 28th of May, 1847, her body was laid with his in the same grave. She had lived eighty-three years.

To what purpose had Mary Lamb lived? the reader may ask. If for no other, surely for this—to give the world a rich and rare example of devoted, beautiful, sisterly affection. With all the anxiety and care that her mental upsettings brought him, Charles Lamb in the last year of his life wrote: "I could nowhere be happier than under the same roof with her." But this was but the expression of his love for her, not hers for him, it may be urged. Very true. But how rich, sweet, patient, and pure must have been Mary's disposition and character to win such an enduring regard from the sensitive, excitable, and singularly constituted Charles Lamb?

Was Mary Lamb a Christian? Nominally, yes. She appears to have had at least an intellectual belief in the truths of our holy religion. Of her inner religious life nothing appears either in her biography, or in that of her brother. Charles

evidently lived in and for the present. His morals were not unimpeachable. He shrunk from serious thought of the future. Perhaps Mary, whose moral virtues were unblemished, thought and felt as he did on the great question of experimental godliness. Perhaps not. But this much one may say, that if to her rare sweetness of disposition, to her patience, to her self-sacrifice, to her indefatigable industry, and her more than ordinary literary ability, she had added that experimental faith in the Gospel, and that tender love for the Lord Jesus which are the brightest adornments of human nature, she would have ranked, not merely among women famous for sisterly affection, intellectual gifts, and social virtues, but also among those elect ladies whose saintliness entitles them to the reverence and love of mankind.

VI.

Frances Ridley Havergal.

"Flowers bloom along the way that Duty treads,
And as thou goest on thy stern, high path
Glimpses will come to thee of heavenly joys
Transcending all the base world reckons of."

THE ideal woman is one who, to gentleness of manners and sweetness of natural disposition, adds the graces of intellectual culture and the adornments of Christian faith and love. Of such a woman a poet sung:

"Her beauty was a godly grace;
The mystery of loveliness,
Which made an altar of her face,
Was not of the flesh, though that was fair;
But a most pure and lambent light,
Without a name, by which the rare
And virtuous spirit flamed to sight."

Personal beauty and mental accomplishments impart a certain charm to women, but they can not kindle that "lambent light" which is the source

of the highest type of female loveliness, and which makes the daughters of the Church, to use an inspired comparison, "as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace." The purpose of this sketch is to briefly portray the character of one such woman, who, whatever rank may be given her in the world of literature, was most assuredly a polished corner-stone in the Church of the living God.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL had the good fortune to be the child of truly Christian parents, and to be born in a home of abundant comfort, of refinement, and of very tender affection. She was the daughter of William Henry Havergal, rector of Astley, Worcestershire, England. She was born December 14, 1836, the youngest of six children, and was remarkably pretty, bright, and active during her infancy. She grew into a fairy-like child, so mentally precocious as to be able to read correctly and to write in round hand when only four years old. Shortly after, she was given lessons in French and in music, albeit her instruction was more or less informal and irregular. When seven years old she began to acquire German by listening, of her own free will, to the professor who gave lessons to her elder sisters, in the rectory drawing-room. Like the distinguished Jaqueline Pascal, she wrote poetry

which was almost "perfect in rhyme and rhythm" before she was nine years of age—a gift which she seems to have inherited from her devout father. These premature developments were not the result of undue pressure, but of the spontaneous activities of a gifted, buoyant intellect. Frances was not, however, a plodding child. She lived a free, gladsome life, in a home which was to her a warm nest of love and cheerfulness, and when out of doors took as much delight as a wild boy might find in climbing a tree or scaling a wall. It seemed as natural to her to acquire knowledge as it was to work off her excess of animal spirits in active amusements.

Seeing that Miss Havergal's career was chiefly marked by the spirituality of her mind and her abundant success in winning souls, the reader will very naturally desire to trace her inner life back to its beginnings. Were her natural inclinations toward the spiritual life stronger than in children generally? some may inquire. She herself has answered this question in the negative. Though living in a home whose atmosphere was in no mean sense like the air of heaven, in which conversation, action, spirit, and reading were all in harmony with the law of Christ, yet she tells us that up to her seventh year

she had no religious impressions whatever. When about that age a sermon on the future life filled her mind with troubled thoughts, and subsequently led her to pray in secret, and to desire that God would "make her a Christian." She was doubtless then for a long time under conviction for sin, but owing to a perverse indisposition "to be talked to" by those she loved best, she concealed her feelings, albeit they were to her at times like burning coals carried in the bosom.

When she was in her tenth year, her father's appointment as canon of Worcester Cathedral and rector of St. Nicholas Church, in that city, took her from the free country life she had hitherto enjoyed, and compelled her to become, as her father called her, "a caged lark" in a city rectory. It was a bitter trial to her young heart, seeing that her love of nature had become almost a passion. Shortly after her arrival at Worcester, a sermon by her father's curate so strengthened her desire to be a Christian that she sought his advice. But the curate either did not comprehend her state of mind, or was so experimentally ignorant of the way of faith, that instead of teaching her bewildered young soul how to find rest in Jesus through simple faith, he merely bade her "try to be a good child and to

pray;" and then, he said, her bad feelings would "soon go off." This was giving the dear, thoughtful child a stone, instead of the bread for which she hungered, and which, but for her strange unwillingness to tell her thoughts to her parents, she might then have found.

When she was eleven years old Frances was called to drink her first cup of bitter earthly grief. Her fond, gentle, devoted mother died, and she was for a time disconsolate. Her father wisely took her and her sisters from the house of death, on a trip to North Wales. Seeing new objects broke the flow of her sorrow, and on her return her animal spirits recovered, in great measure, their wonted activity, though, as she afterwards wrote, her grief still affected her very deeply at times. Yet, if any thing else attracted her attention, she had a happy faculty of forgetting her great grief for the moment. "And thus it happened," she says, "that a merry laugh or a sudden light-heeled scamper up-stairs and down-stairs, led others to think I had not many sad thoughts; whereas, not a minute before, my little heart was heavy and sad." Thus, as is probably the case with most thoughtful children, not even her nearest friends could fathom the mysteries of her child nature.

In this disturbed state of mind, this interesting girl continued for five years, learning more and more of the evil in her heart, constantly reading the Scriptures, praying for faith which she knew not how to exercise, and still studiously hiding her mental exercises, beneath a cheerful demeanor, from friends who would have gladly led her to the "light of life." When thirteen years old, she was sent to a young ladies' school at Belmont, which was conducted by a Mrs. Teed, who was a truly Christian teacher. The spirit of this institution was truly religious. It pupils were taught that while it was important to acquire secular knowledge, it was still more important to "know God and his Son Jesus Christ." Such teaching could not well fail of spiritual results, and toward the close of Miss Havergal's first term it culminated in a powerful revival. Many of the young ladies were led to pluck sweet fruit from the tree of life. Miss Havergal's sensitive mind responded to those quickening energies of the Holy Spirit. She became increasingly desirous to find Him for whom she had so long and, as it seemed, so vainly sought. Still her reticence kept her from making her anxieties known, until one afternoon a young lady whom she loved very dearly, sat down by her side and told her with joyful

tears that she had received the forgiveness of her sins through faith in Christ. "He is my Savior," she said, "and I am so happy!" and then she urged Miss Havergal to look to Him who, she said, "now loves you, though you do n't know it."

After that afternoon Frances ceased to hide her religious feelings. She talked with others who had recently found salvation. She sought more earnestly than ever, but found no peace until during the vacation, while visiting at Oakhampton, she opened her heart to a Miss Cooke—a lady who was about to become her mother-in-law. That lady saw that, though the girl was thoroughly in earnest—was ready to sacrifice even life, if necessary, for Christ's sake, and had faith in the sense of mere *belief* of the truth—yet she had not faith in the sense of simple *trust*. Hence she said to her: "Why can not you *trust* yourself to your Savior at once? Supposing that now, at this moment, Christ were to come in the clouds of heaven, . . . could you not *trust* him? Would not his call, his promise, be enough for you? Could you not commit your soul to him, to your Savior, Jesus?"

This was the word in season. The long-time disheartened girl grew breathless. Hope sent a bright ray into her heart as she responded, "I *could*,

surely." And then hastening to her chamber she dropped upon her knees before the Lord, committed her soul to his keeping for eternity, and, as the persuasion arose within her, that he was faithful, and would keep what she intrusted to his keeping, "earth and heaven" grew bright from that moment. And she wrote of that crucial point in her life, "I did trust the Lord Jesus."

It is singular that with a mind so acute and bright, with so much religious instruction from truly pious parents, with habits of prayer and of Bible reading, with such deep spiritual convictions, and with such strenuous desire to be the Lord's disciple, this young lady should have groped so long and darkly after the faith by which all souls must enter into the rest promised by Jesus to all who come to him. Doubtless there was a lack of definiteness in all that had been taught her concerning faith, until Miss Cooke led her to see the difference between mere intellectual belief and heart trust. Yet her own stubborn refusal to be "talked to" about her personal relations to Christ must be accepted as the principal cause of her many days of darkness. But for that, her deceased mother, her truly devout father, or her pious elder sister, might, probably would, have given her the light imparted at last by

Miss Cooke. Pride, self-will, and a secret recoil from the spiritual claims of the Gospel, no doubt entered into her reticence and stubbornness. When these dispositions were surrendered, light broke in upon her mind, and she received the faith by which she was to become a burning and a shining light.

The birth of the spiritual life did not check Miss Havergal's intellectual aspirations. It rather stimulated them by adding to the pleasures of acquisition the spur of moral motives. "I can not bear to be ignorant," she wrote. She thought "that earthly learning would not tempt her to forget heavenly things." There was no need of its doing so; but such was the enthusiasm with which she pursued her secular studies, first at a school near Worcester, and then at an institution in Düsseldorf, Germany, that they did not only tempt her to forget the heavenly, but actually succeeded for a time in hindering her spiritual growth. "Day after day," she writes, "I grew more eager for my lessons, and less earnest in seeking Jesus." But this lessening of her zeal for Christ was only temporary. It checked but did not choke the divine life, which lived on, while she pursued her studies in French, in German, in Italian, in general literature, in Greek, in Hebrew, and in music. In the Düsseldorf school,

notwithstanding some attacks of illness, she stood first among one hundred and ten pupils. Her teachers there rightly enough regarded her as a remarkably gifted young lady, with a singular aptitude for acquiring languages, and an uncommon capacity for perceiving and enjoying the beauties of the best literature.

Her school life terminated in 1853, but not her pursuit of knowledge, which she loved, not for its own sake alone, but also because, as she wrote in 1866, it "fitted her to do the Master's work." Her external life, spent for the next few years partly at home and partly as a private teacher in the family of one of her sisters, was by no means marked by stirring incidents. In fact, Miss Havergal's life interests the public, not because of its eventfulness, but because of its spirituality, earnestness in Christian work, and uncommon usefulness.

Looking, therefore, for the influences which tended to the development of her religious life, we find that she was greatly quickened, after her arrival home from Düsseldorf, by the solemnities of the cathedral services at her "confirmation." To very many, if not to most persons, this ritualistic and non-scriptural performance is little else than a lifeless form. In her case it was a very profitable ceremony. She

entered into the inner meaning of its forms, and uttered the required vows, not with lips alone, but with her heart. As she knelt before the bishop she prayed, "My God, O my *own* Father, thou blessed Jesus, my *own* Savior, thou Holy Spirit, my *own* Comforter." When called on to promise fidelity to her baptismal vows, she said in her heart: "Lord, I can not, without thee, but O, with thy almighty help, I DO!" And when in the final prayer it was asked that she "may continue thine forever," her heart swelled and thrilled with the thought, "*Thine forever!*" And after returning home she wrote:

> "O, thine forever! What a blessed thing
> To be forever his who died for me!
> My Savior, all my life thy praise I'll sing,
> Nor cease my song throughout eternity."

From this time her experience became a constant yearning after a perfect faith. Its key-notes were: "O, to be filled with joy and the Holy Ghost!" "O, why can not I trust him fully?" "O, that I could grow up in him!" These deep desires were no sickly and fitful sentimentalities, but the healthy longings of a truly devout mind. She fed these lofty aspirations, not with mystical fancies or fanatical imaginations, but with holy Scripture systematically read, constantly searched, and

prayerfully accepted as words spoken to her by their divine Author. Speaking of her love of God's Word her sister writes:

"She knew the whole of the Gospels, Epistles, Revelation, the Psalms, and Isaiah. The minor prophets she learned in later years. At this time (1858) she was taking the titles of Christ for her daily searchings and remarks." And Frances herself, speaking of her method of reading Scripture, says: "Yesterday I took Christ, our advocate. It is one of the sweet titles. I like to think about the Lord Jesus as he is in himself, not only in relation to myself."

Thus striving to use the Word as a revelation of Christ, her growth was steadfast, and her spiritual life soon grew into a perennial Spring. Writing of some particular experience at this time, she said: "I really then took a step onward. . . . The truth made me free. I lost that dreary bondage of doubt, and almost despair, that chained me for so many years. . . . Whereas, I could not see why I should be *saved*, I now can not see why I should not be saved, if Christ died for all. On that word I take my stand, and *rest there.* I still wait for the hour when he will reveal himself to me more directly; but it is the quiet waiting of

present trust, not the restless waiting of anxiety and danger. *His death* is really my confidence, and I have tasted the sweetness of one new thing—*praise!*"

Holding this Scriptural conception of faith, one might reasonably expect to find Frances abiding henceforth on the high table-lands of settled peace. Her letters, however, show that she was often driven into the gloomy valleys of doubt. Reasoning on the causes of these seasons of mental depression, she wrote: "I think the great root of all my trouble and alienation is, that I do not now make an unreserved surrender of myself to God, and until this is done I shall know no peace. I have so much to regret, a greater dread of the opinion of worldly friends, a loving of the world, and proportionate cooling in heavenly desire and love."

Again she gives the result of her self-scrutiny in these expressive words: "I want to make the most of my life, and to do the best with it; but here I feel my desires and motives need much purifying; for even where all would sound fair enough in words, an element of self, of lurking pride, may be detected. O, that He would indeed purify me, and make me white at any cost!"

Later on we find her saying: "It seems as if the Lord had led me into a calmer and more equable

frame of mind; not joy, but peace. . . . Why should I not take for granted all I find in the Bible? . . . I have been so happy lately, and the words, 'Thou hast put gladness in my heart,' I can use as true of my own case, especially as to one point. I am *sure* now (and I never was before) that I do love God. I love him distinctly, positively, and I think I have loved him more and longer than I thought, only I dared not own it to myself. O, that I loved him more and more! How I abhor myself for having loved, for loving, so little."

Doubtless, while under these leadings of the Spirit, Miss Havergal had underrated her own faith and love. One cause of this was her highly developed conscientiousness. Her standard of action and feeling was high. Things of which many Christians would take no note, she regarded as serious offenses. Hence we find her writing to a friend: "I said something yesterday, dear Elizabeth, which I much regret, though thoughtlessly and not intentionally uttered. I thought after that it seemed like an imputation upon ——; the faintest impression of which I would remove from your mind. Perhaps you did not notice it; but I did, and grieved that I said it."

Having such a keenly sensitive conscience, and a habit of constant introspection, joined to an emotional nature, which for a long time led her to bring the question of her relation to God to the test of feeling, it is not surprising that this devout soul, whose spotless life was a daily self-denial, whose aspirations breathed after the highest, and whose bodily frame was fragile as a flower, and subject to frequent attacks of illness, should be often found in the valley of humiliation writing bitter things against herself. And it was not until she learned to keep her mental eye looking, not upon herself, but upon Jesus, that she escaped from her doubts. Then she wrote: "As soon as 'I' in any form comes in, there is a shadow upon the light. Still this shadow need not fall. When the eye is fixed upon Christ as the substitute, the lamb slain, then all is clear. But once introduce that 'I,' and you get bewildered between faith and feeling."

But to get that "I" from clouding the vision of faith, she learned at last that the "I" must be fully surrendered, inwardly as well as outwardly consecrated, to the absolute control of her Lord. Glimpses of this duty had been given her by the Holy Spirit for some time; but it was not until 1873 that she clearly comprehended its breadth, its

obligation, and its attainability through simple faith. A tractate, entitled "All for Jesus," was then sent her by a friend. It attracted her attention, because it pointed the way to a state of mind for which she was earnestly yearning, and toward which the Spirit was leading her. She thus described its effects upon her experience:

"I first saw clearly the blessedness of true consecration. I saw it as a flash of electric light; and what you *see* you can never *unsee*. There must be full surrender before there can be full blessedness. God admits you by the one into the other. He himself showed me all this most clearly. . . . First, I was shown that 'the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us all from sin;' and then it was made plain to me that he who had thus cleansed me had power to keep me clean; so I just *utterly yielded* myself to him, and *utterly trusted* him to keep me."

Was ever the faith that opens the gate to the highest attainable purity on earth more simply, more beautifully defined? *Utterly yielding*, and *utterly trusting*—the whole being given to God, and an unquestioning trust that he would fulfill his promise! These are, indeed, the keys to the inner sanctuary of Christian saintliness. By them Miss Havergal passed out of the "sunless ravines," in

which she had often walked with her harp unstrung, into the "highway of holiness," where, henceforth, says her sister, "her peace and joy flowed onward, deepening and widening under the teaching of God the Holy Ghost." And she herself declared, "The blessing she had received lifted her whole life into sunshine, of which all she had previously experienced was but as pale and passing April gleams, compared with the fullness of Summer glory."

Of the genuineness of this high experience her subsequent life was a constant illustration. Her sister testifies that it shone conspicuously in "the unswerving obedience of her *home life*," which, as she well observes, "is the surest test of all." It was visible in her endurance of trials and losses, both great and small, which were no longer causes of worriment and vexed feelings. It was manifest in her humility of spirit, which, while rejoicing that she was "kept from falling, kept from sins, . . . by the power of God," confessed that "one instant of standing alone" would involve "a certain fall" into sin; that God's "very keeping implies total helplessness without it, and the very cleansing most distinctly implies defilement without it."

An intense hatred of sin was another evidence of the genuineness of this blessed life. Sin had

become to her an intolerable thing, against which she "watched like a sentinel when his captain is standing by him on the ramparts." And with all her frankness in writing and speaking to her friends of this new-born blessedness, she was too modest and too truthful to profess herself absolutely sinless. "Sinlessness," she said, "belongs only to Christ now, and to our glorified state in heaven." Hence she continued to pray, "Cleanse me *thoroughly* from my sin;" and pleaded to be shown any unknown depths of it which might have been hidden from her through lack of sufficient light. "Understand me," she wrote, "it is not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, I press *toward* the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

In Miss Havergal's manner and spirit there appears to have been no real or affected austerity, no forbidding primness, no repulsive gloominess. On the contrary, "joyousness" was the characteristic of her spiritual life. She always had been remarkably cheerful. She was so still. The abiding gladness within had its expression in her face and action. Hence it was a common remark among her acquaintances, "Frances looks so really happy, she must have something we have not." And her sister

says that, "with the utmost skill, no artist or photograph gives a *real* idea of her lighted-up expression. Is it because soul can not be represented any more than a sunbeam? And my pen too fails in giving an idea to strangers of her sunny ways, merrily playing with children, and heartily enjoying all things. But her deep sympathy with others' joys and sorrows, and her loyal longings that all should know the joy unspeakable and full of glory, were the secret of her influence with others."

Another fruit of her exalted attainment was an increase in her zeal for Christ and human souls. She had been early trained by her devout father to love benevolent work. While yet at Worcester, she had been a worker for the poor. After her conversion she had done admirable work in her father's parish Sunday-school, at St. Nicholas. Two successive classes of boys, who had seemed incorrigible, had been intrusted to her care, and had been wonderfully benefited by her affectionate and faithful teaching. · Her rare musical gifts she had made to do good service, by "singing for Jesus," and composing hymns which were much sought after, and many of which have won a permanent place in sacred psalmody. Her "cards," and her writings for various periodicals had also been the fruitage of

her Christian activity. In all these departments she had illustrated the activity of her faith. Her increased faith added fuel to the already steadfast flame of her zeal. Up to the extreme measure of her strength she now kept her facile pen employed, and the works she produced were very widely read. Perhaps, however, in nothing was the effect of her stronger faith more fully seen than in the increased effectiveness of her personal efforts to win souls. Her skill in this difficult sphere of action was singularly great. She was an adept in the art of speaking for Christ. She could do it in social meetings, in parlor readings, and in conversation with individuals in such a manner that, though it might sometimes fail in making a conquest, yet it did not alienate the individual either from herself or from religion. She did it, too, when need required, under circumstances ordinarily considered unfavorable. At a large party, for example, when asked to sing, she selected a spiritual song, and rendered it with such deep feeling that it subdued the giddy throng into "dead silence." Writing of this incident, she adds:

"Afterwards I had two really important conversations with strangers. One seemed extremely surprised at finding himself quite easily drifted from

the badinage with which he started, into a right down personal talk about *his* personal danger and *his* only hope for safety; he took it very well, and thanked me."

The secret of her effectiveness in such personal conversation is revealed, where she says: "Somehow it is wonderful how the Master manages for me in such cases. I do n't think any one can say that I force the subject; it just develops one thing out of another, quite naturally, till very soon they find themselves face to face with eternal things, and the Lord Jesus can be freely lifted up before them. I could not *contrive* a conversation thus."

Of course she could not contrive, for there was no cant, nothing perfunctory, in her Christian work. Christ and his Gospel were to her living facts. She really lived in them and for him. It was, therefore, as natural for her to speak of them as of the realities of her material life and surroundings. Perhaps much of the influence of her numerous hymns and excellent books arises out of her strong sense of the reality of the things about which she wrote. But for this, some of her writings would impress one as the outflow of a woman's sentimentalism. They do, indeed, abound in sentiment, but it is not the shallow sentiment of empty feeling, but the expression

of solid truth, impregnated with the genuine emotion of a soul thoroughly possessed by it.

Miss Havergal's faith bore the test of many external trials, bereavements, sickness, and delicate health. She had been called to close the eyes of her beloved father in 1870. In 1874 she suffered long from typhus fever. In 1878 her "second mother" passed the mysterious river we call Death, and, as a consequence, the family home-nest was broken up, and she sought a quiet retreat with her sister Marie, in Wales, at a place named the Mumbles, in the town of Swansea. In 1879 her fragile body was attacked by a painful and mortal disease. Her sufferings were intense. When nearing her end, one of her physicians said to her, "Good-bye; I shall not see you again." Very composedly she asked him:

"Do you really think I am going?"

"Yes," replied the doctor.

"To-day?" she inquired.

"Probably," said he.

"Beautiful; too good to be true!" she exclaimed; and then, after a pause, she smiled and added, "Splendid! to be so near the gates of heaven."

In this glad frame of mind she awaited the final moment. Its coming was announced by terrible

convulsions. When they ceased she nestled down in the pillows, folded her hands on her breast, and said, "There, now it is all over! Blessed rest!"

"And now," says her sister, "she looked up steadfastly, as if she saw the Lord, and surely nothing less heavenly could have reflected such a glorious radiance upon her face. For ten minutes we watched that almost visible meeting with her King, and her countenance was so glad, as if she were already talking to him. Then she tried to sing; but after one sweet high note, 'He—,' her voice failed, and, as her brother commended her soul into her Redeemer's hand, she passed away. . . . So *she* took

> 'The one grand step beyond the stars of God
> Into the splendor, shadowless and broad,
> Into the everlasting joy and light,
> The zenith of the earthly life was come.'"

Frances was in her prime when she finished her earthly work. Only forty-two years were permitted her in this preparatory school for the life which is to be lived, and the duties which are to be performed in the city of our God. But she had made those years fruitful, through the grace of Christ, in building her own character into beauty and strength, and in good works for the benefit of others. Her

noble character is a precious legacy to the Church and the world. To young women it is especially valuable, as showing them that when a woman adds the adornments of elevated piety to the charm of her personal attraction and intellectual gifts, she not only attains the highest degree of possible human happiness for herself, but is also made instrumental of immeasurable good to others. Multitudes now call Miss Havergal blessed. Why? Because she was a gifted, cultivated lady, with winning manners? Nay, not for these endowments alone. Had she lived a selfish life, seeking her pleasure in dress, in amusements, in gay assemblies, in the delights of this life, to whom would her life have been a rich guerdon? Who would revere and cherish her memory to-day? Not for her gifts, therefore, is she lovingly remembered by multitudes, but because those gifts were consecrated to Christ and to human good. Because she was a woman inspired by a faith founded on the Word of God; nourished by that Word made radiant by the divine illumination, she lives, and will live in the memory of coming generations, as a beautiful illustration of the power of piety to sanctify and enlarge the influence of woman. "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

VII.

Felicia Hemans.

"We do not hesitate to say that Mrs. Hemans is, beyond all comparison, the most touching and accomplished writer of occasional verses that our literature has yet to boast of."

—Edinburgh Review.

IN the above epitaph we have the verdict of the leading literary Review of our Fatherland some sixty years since, respecting the poems of Mrs. Hemans. This approving criticism found its echo on this side of the Atlantic in the unprecedented demand of American readers for her works. Professor Norton, of Cambridge, was so impressed with the beauty and sweetness of her poems, that he sent her a letter, with a book, by the hand of a friend, who accidentally dropped it on the sands of Illverstone, in England. The packet was picked up, badly injured by its wetting, taken to a little wayside inn, and placed near the fire to dry. There

it was noticed by an intelligent gentleman, who, after deciphering its address, forwarded it to Mrs. Hemans. The letter contained a generous offer from the friendly and admiring professor to superintend the republication of her writings in this country. She gladly and gratefully accepted his proffered aid. The popularity of her poems led some distinguished Americans to become her correspondents. Among these was that devout lover of noble thought and pure morality, Dr. Channing. It also became fashionable for Americans traveling in England to call on Mrs. Hemans. Mr. Chorley, author of her "Memorials," says, perhaps with some exaggeration:

"I remember seeing a beautiful girl from New York much excited and awe-struck at the thought of being admitted to her presence. 'My friends at home,' she said, 'will think so much of me for having seen Mrs. Hemans!'"

It may be because of a change in the taste of readers, or possibly because of the shoals of books and periodicals which inundate their tables, that the poems of Mrs. Hemans are now less generally read than in other days. This is to be regretted, especially because it prevents many young ladies from becoming acquainted with a collection of poems

most admirably fitted to refine their tastes, cultivate their love of the beautiful, and to guard them against their liability—or shall I say, tendency?—to permit sentiment to flow into sentimentality, unchastened by the checks and balances of religious thought. Mrs. Hemans gives an example of her sentiment in her epigraph prefixed to "Constanza," one of the poems in her "Records of Woman," in which she expresses the feelings of a true wife, whose false husband had abandoned her without cause:

"Art thou, then, desolate?
Of friends, of hopes, forsaken? Come to me!
I am thine own. Have trusted hearts proved false?
Flatterers deceived thee? Wanderer, come to me!
Why didst thou ever leave me? Knowest thou all
I would have borne, and called it joy to bear,
For thy sake? Know'st thou that thy voice had power
To shake me with a thrill of happiness
By one kind tone—to fill mine eyes with tears
Of yearning love? And thou—O, thou didst throw
That crushed affection back upon my heart;
Yet come to me!—it died not."

These lines were doubtless wrung from her own heart, as will appear in the course of the following sketch of her somewhat uneventful life.

Mrs. Hemans was the daughter of a Liverpool merchant named Browne. He was a native of

Ireland. Her mother was of mingled Italian and German descent, some of her ancestors having been numbered among the doges of Venice. Felicia was born in Liverpool, September 25, 1793, but was taken to the town of Gwrych (pronounced Grieth), in Wales, with her parents when she was less than seven years of age. There, in a lonely old mansion near the sea, shut in by a picturesque range of mountains, she passed the following nine years of her childhood, under the care of one of the best of mothers. If the reader can imagine an extremely beautiful, fairy-like child, with a brilliant complexion, with a face that constantly changed its color with her swiftly-changing thoughts, and with a finely-formed head, covered with long, curling, golden hair, she will have before her mind an image of Felicia Dorothea Browne, as she was when little more than five years of age. A lady who saw her at this period in one of her sprightly moods, observed, "That child is not made for happiness, I know; her color comes and goes too fast."

This remark was not meant to imply that little Felicia's disposition was unhappy, but only that her exquisite sensibilities, indicated by her changing color, would cause her to suffer unusually from such troubles as might touch her life. In this

sense, the woman's words were a prophecy. Felicia was quick to drink in delight from the beautiful and the good, but she was also quick to suffer keen pain when touched by the nettles of evil.

"Poets are born, not made," says the popular adage, and it was illustrated in Felicia's childhood. She revealed her poetic nature in the fantastic visions which filled her childish mind; in her passionate love for every grand and beautiful thing in nature; in her vague, romantic aspirations; in the pleasure she found in hearing, reading, and reciting fragments of poetry; and in that unrest of spirit which is born of the early struggles of genius to give expression to its as yet cloud-like perceptions.

She was also a precocious child, eager to acquire, quick to learn, and gifted with a remarkable memory. "Why, Felice, you can not have read that," her teacher often said to her when she went to repeat her lesson. "O, yes! I have, and I will repeat it to you," was her prompt reply. And she always did, to the astonishment of her teacher, who thought her memory to be almost supernatural.

This gifted child owed much for both her mental and spiritual growth to her pious and devoted mother, whose love she returned with all the wealth of her deep filial affection. In her sonnet "To a

Family Bible," she subsequently drew a picture of her mother's methods of training her, which is surpassingly tender and beautiful. Addressing the dear old Book, she says:

"What household thoughts around thee as their shrine
Cling reverently! Of anxious looks beguiled
My mother's eyes, upon thy page divine,
Each day were bent; her accents gravely mild,
Breathed out thy love; whilst I, a dreamy child,
Wandered, on breeze-like fancies, far away,
To some lone tuft of gleaming Spring-flowers wild—
Some fresh-discovered nook for woodland play;
Some secret nest: yet would the solemn Word,
At times with kindlings of young wonder heard,
Fall on my wakened spirit, there to be
A seed not lost; for which, in darker years,
O, Book of Heaven! I pour, with grateful tears,
Heart-blessings on the holy dead and thee!"

The solitude of the home of her childhood, with the free life permitted her, contributed to the growth of her poetic instincts. She rambled at her own sweet will in mountain nooks, lowland dells, and along the ocean shore, fearing no danger. Tradition said the ancient old mansion was haunted, and that a fiery goblin grayhound kept nightly watch at the end of the avenue leading from its doors. So fearless was she of being harmed that one moonlit night she crept from her chamber eager to catch a

glimpse of the phantom dog. And it was one of her childish freaks, after being put snugly to bed by her nurse-maid, to steal from her bed to the sea-shore, and indulge in the luxury of a bath. This half-wild freedom, this confiding familiarity with nature, together with her prematurely developed capacity to read and appreciate such books as Shakespeare's plays, and standard historic works, especially histories of Spain, in which land of romance one of her brothers was serving in the British army under the great Wellington, furnished abundant food for her fancy. Of systematic education she had little. She was never at school. Her principal instructor was a gentleman who gave her lessons in French, English grammar, and the rudiments of Latin. So delighted was this teacher with her intellectual power that he was wont to say:

"It is a pity she was not born a man, for then she might have borne away the highest honors of a college."

Twice during her girlhood Felicia was taken to London by her parents. Many things in that vast city impressed her susceptible mind, particularly a gallery of statuary, on entering which she exclaimed, "O, hush! do n't speak!" But amidst all the strange sights of the great metropolis, she longed for

her home by the sea-side, and for the companionship of her younger brother and sister, in their favorite rural haunts in the woods, and in their rambles along the shore, where she could enjoy

"A sound and a gleam of the moaning sea."

Felicia's winning manners fascinated all who knew her. The old gardener at Gwrych used to say, "Miss Felicia can 'tice me to do whatsoever she pleases." A gentleman of the neighborhood was so warm in his praises of her character and genius that his sister said to him playfully, "Brother, you must be in love with that girl." To this he promptly replied, "If I were twenty years younger I would marry her!" It is not, therefore, a matter of surprise that when she was only fifteen years of age her friends persuaded her to print a volume of her poems, one, at least, of which she had written when only nine years of age. It was published in quarto form. Her youth ought to have been her shield against the critic's dart. It was partly, but not wholly, so. One pitiless reviewer struck her work with so sharp a pen that her sensitive young soul suffered so keenly that, says Mr. Chorley, one of her biographers, "she was confined to her bed for several days." Nevertheless, though the gall of his pen was bitter, it proved to be a wholesome

medicine, in that it stimulated her to study more deeply, and to meditate more patiently, before giving her future poetic compositions to the world. Her second volume, published four years later, gave evidence both of the growth of her mind and of greater carefulness in weaving her thoughts into verse. And Mr. Chorley informs us that her earliest volume was almost the only one "for the sake of which she had to taste the gall, as well as the honey of criticism."

About the time of the publication of her earliest poems, there came to the neighborhood of Gwrych a soldier whose person, manners, and education were such as to awaken the admiration of this susceptible and romantic girl. He was a captain in the British army. Felicia, says her sister, "was then only fifteen; in the full glow of that radiant beauty which was destined to fade so early. The mantling bloom of her cheeks was shaded by a profusion of natural ringlets of a rich, golden brown; and the ever-varying expression of her brilliant eyes gave a changeful play to her countenance, which made it impossible for any painter to do justice to it." To cite Wordsworth's graceful lines:

"She was a phantom of delight,
When first she gleamed upon my sight;

A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament.

. . . . .

A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay."

That such a lovely, gifted girl should charm the eyes of a gay young soldier, was natural, as it also was that she, so artless, romantic, and full of enthusiasm for the heroes of war, should be won to regard him with affection. Neither his friends nor hers favored their attachment. On both sides it was hoped that, as the captain was about to sail with his regiment to Spain, time and distance would dissolve the spell of their as yet unripened regard. They were mistaken. Spain was to Felicia the land of heroes, and when her lover went thither to fight in the land of the ancient Cid, her imagination transformed him into a hero, to whom she freely surrendered her heart. They did not meet again for three years, but when they did, in 1812, she became the soldier's bride.

During his absence, Felicia's family had removed from Gwrych to Bronwylfa, Flintshire. She had more society here than in the former place, but she gave herself with supreme devotion to study. To her knowledge of French and Italian, she now

added the Spanish, Portuguese, and German. She astonished her friends, one day, by committing to memory the whole of Reginald Heber's poem of "Europe," containing four hundred and twenty-four lines, in the almost incredibly short space of one hour and twenty minutes—a feat of memory which shows that the acquisition of languages must have been for her a by no means difficult task.

Her days at Bronwylfa appear to have been among the happiest of her life. Congenial society, added to the studies she loved, to the pleasures of poetical composition, and to the hope begotten of the love which nestled in her guileless spirit, made her life one long joy. And in 1812, as remarked above, she published her second volume, entitled "The Domestic Affections and Other Poems," gave her hand to Captain Hemans, and removed with him to Daventry, England, where they took up their residence, because he had been appointed adjutant to the Northamptonshire militia.

Her eldest son, Arthur, was born in Daventry, from which place she returned to her mother's home at Bronwylfa, at the close of a year. Her biographers shed no light on the character of her marital relations. One can not tell whether they were harmonious or discordant. On her part, she

was still zealous in the pursuit of knowledge, and went very little into society. The captain, her husband, seems to have been somewhat broken in health. The hardships of Sir John Moore's famous retreat to Corunna, in Spain, in which he bore a part, and the still greater hardships he endured in an unfortunate British military expedition in Holland, had proved too much for his constitution. Six years after his marriage, he therefore determined to try the effect of a softer climate. Mrs. Hemans thought that her literary pursuits, and the education of their five sons, required her to remain with her beloved mother at Bronwylfa. Hence, in 1818, he went to Rome, not with any defined purpose of separating from her, and, though they corresponded, they never met again. Over the real causes which led to their divided lives, there hangs a cloud. The probability is, that their tastes and habits of thought not being wholly congenial, they gradually grew apart, and their ill-advised marriage ended in practical separation. Nevertheless, if the lines prefixed to her poem entitled "Constanza," and cited above, were an expression of her feelings, it would appear that her affection for her husband, though sorely wounded, was never entirely quenched.

On the departure of her husband, Mrs. Hemans,

instead of indulging in indolent sorrow, as a weaker woman might have done, threw the full force of her active mind into her literary work. In 1819 she published a poem on Wallace and Bruce, which won a prize for which a little army of writers had contested. The next year she published "The Sceptic," which was warmly praised by the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, not for its poetic merits only, but especially for its freedom from every stain, and for the "breath of all moral beauty and loveliness" which animated it. The last lines of this truly beautiful composition indicate, not only a deepening of her religious feelings, under her matrimonial trials, but also of her maternal interest in the spiritual needs of her children. What but this could have inspired her pen when, writing of "Devotion's Voice" in cottage homes, she said:

"There may the mother, as with anxious joy
To heaven her lessons consecrate her boy,
Teach his young accents still the immortal lays
Of Zion's bards in inspiration's days;
. . . . . .
And as, her soul all glistening in her eyes,
She bids the prayer of infancy arise,
Tell of His name who left His throne on high,
Earth's lowliest lot to bear and sanctify;
His love divine by keenest anguish tried,
And fondly say, "My child, for thee he died!"

The growth of her genius, shown in the increasing beauty and strength of her work, now began to attract the attention of distinguished men. Such notable personages as Dr. Luxmoore, bishop of St. Asaph, Reginald Heber, and, a little later, Sir Walter Scott, Henry Park, Esq., and Rev. Robert Morehead, were led to seek her acquaintance and take an interest in her growing reputation. In 1821 the Royal Society of Literature, having offered a prize for the best poem on the subject of "Dartmoor," she entered the contest, and was awarded the prize. This success gratified her exceedingly, but chiefly because of the delight it awoke in her sons, one of whom, Arthur, being told the welcome news while working on his Latin exercise, sprang from his seat and exclaimed in high glee:

"Now I am sure mamma is a better poet than Lord Byron!"

Her son George gave vent to his joy in deafening acclamations, and finally said, "The excess of my pleasure has really given me a headache."

Thus she found the sweetest drop in the cup which Fame was bringing to her lips to be the happiness with which it swelled the heart of her fond mother and of her noble and beloved boys. And thus she illustrated in herself the truth of a

remark she had often repeated, that "Fame can only afford *reflected* delight to a woman." She loves it, not for itself, but because it adds to the happiness of the beings in whom she lives her own life.

In 1821, at the suggestion of Reginald Heber, she wrote a dramatic poem entitled "The Vespers of Palermo." She had no intention when composing it to offer it for performance in a theater, but some of her admirers urged her to let this beautiful piece of dramatic work try its fortunes on the stage. She consented, and after manifold vexations and delays it was produced in Covent Garden, London, under the direction of Mr. C. Kemble. It failed to please the corrupt fancies of an audience unused to such pure, high-toned thoughts as gave it character, though its failure was attributed by Kemble and others to the actress who personated Constance, its principal female character, which was so much above her own she could not fairly represent it. It was subsequently acted in Edinburgh with marked success, under the auspices of Sir Walter Scott and Joanna Baillie, with Mrs. Siddons as Constance. But it did not secure a permanent place among plays acceptable to the theater-going public. Mrs. Hemans did not regret this, for as she became

better acquainted with the character and influence of the theater she lost what little sympathy she had at first with the acted drama. The truth is, that the theater is too incurably corrupt ever to tolerate such lofty-toned dramas as "The Vespers of Palermo;" or as the plays of Joanna Baillie and Hannah More, which were written for the avowed purpose of testing the possibility of reforming the stage. And within the current year the present proprietor of Covent Garden Theater, London, in a review article, confesses that after making an experiment running through several years, he can not satisfy his audiences even with the "legitimate drama;" that is, standard plays like Shakespeare, etc., but that they will have spectacular plays, including the disgusting ballet dancers, or withhold their patronage. Surely the theater is not a fitting institution for a Christian lady to approve even by writing for its benefit, much less is it fit for her to frequent. It is one of "the unfruitful works of darkness."

In 1825 Mrs. Hemans removed with her mother from Bronwylfa to Rhyllon, an adjacent property. Here she spent one of the happiest years of her life. It was most beautifully situated, and had just beyond its sloping lawn a woodland dell in which she was wont to sit and read in the soft afternoons

of Summer. This romantic spot she described with picturesque effect in the following lines found in her "Hour of Romance."

"There were thick leaves above me and around,
And low, sweet sighs, like those of childhood's sleep,
Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound
As of soft showers on water. Dark and deep
Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf—so still,
They seemed but pictured glooms; a hidden rill
Made music—such as haunts us in a dream—
Under the fern tufts; and a tender gleam
Of soft green light, as by the glow-worm shed,
Came pouring through the woven beech-boughs down."

But these months of peaceful brightness and cheerful activity spent with her happy boys and her thoughtful, loving mother, proved to be the precursors of months of gloom and sorrow. In 1826 death made the hearth-stone of her eldest brother "lonely and deserted." The angel of affliction then took up his abode at Rhyllon, and her mother, whose long years of superintending, sympathetic care had deluded them into the fancy that for her the earth "contained no tomb," was laid on a bed of mortal sickness. Through eight weary months of suffering that best of mothers gradually lost her hold on life, and then her "kind eyes were sealed forever" by the gentle hand of the death-angel.

The feelings of Mrs. Hemans in that sad hour can not be better told than in the following touching hymn which she composed at the bedside of her dying mother:—

"Father! that in the olive shade
When the dark hour came on,
Did'st with a breath of heavenly aid,
Strengthen thy Son;

O! by the anguish of that night,
Send us down blest relief;
Or to the chastened, let thy might
Hallow this grief!

And thou, that when the starry sky
Saw the dread strife begun,
Did'st teach adoring faith to cry,
'Thy will be done,'

By thy meek spirit, thou, of all
That e'er have mourned the chief—
Thou Savior! if the stroke *must* fall,
Hallow this grief."

The effect of the religious training given her children by Mrs. Hemans was beautifully illustrated in the hour of her mother's death. Wearied with grief and watching, she left the chamber of death and went down stairs to the room where her children were sitting silent and awe-stricken around the

fire. Her face wore such a sad expression that it moved them to pity, and her little boy, George, said to her with childish tenderness:

"Please, mamma, let me read you a chapter in the Bible; I am sure it will do you good."

The child thought rightly. The words of God did prove to be balm to her wounded heart, and the faith of her boy in the healing power of those divine words added not a little to her consolation in that hour of sorrow.

In the death of her mother Mrs. Hemans lost her chief earthly stay. Her father had died several years earlier. Her husband, except in name, was as a stranger to her. Her mother's thoughtful care had hitherto relieved her of household responsibilities. Henceforth the burden of her family must rest upon her own shoulders. It was a prime necessity also that her literary work should be prosecuted with unremitting vigor. Her health, which had been quite delicate for several years, was inadequate to the strain now put upon it. Painful symptoms of disease, with depressions of spirit, amounting at times to fits of melancholy, gave her occasional intimations that her life henceforth must, in part at least, be that of an invalid. It is not, therefore, surprising that she wrote of herself to a friend:

"My spirits are as variable as the lights and shadows now flitting with the wind over the high grass, and sometimes the tears gush into my eyes, when I can scarcely define the cause. . . . I am a strange being, I think. I put myself in mind of an Irish melody, with its quick and wild transitions from sadness to gayety."

But she had yet eight years to live, during which, said her sister, "she was to be a stranger to any thing like an equal flow of quiet, steadfast happiness. Fugitive enjoyments; entrancing excitements; adulation the most intoxicating; society the most brilliant—all these, and more than these, were hers in after years; but the old home feeling of shelter and security was gone forever, 'removed like a shepherd's tent.'"

But notwithstanding these oppressive afflictions, her courage still nerved her to obey the impulses of her genius, and to complete her most popular work, "The Records of Women," which was published in 1828. "I have put my heart and individual feelings into this volume more than in any thing else I have written," she wrote to a friend. And there is the inspiration of a heart exquisitely tender and affectionate in the poems of which it is composed. Take, for example, the following

extract from the "Bride of the Greek Isle." In her farewell to the home of her girlhood, the bride is made to say to her sister:

"I leave thee, sister! We have played
Through many a joyous hour,
When the silvery green of the olive shade
Hung dim over fount and bower.
Yes, thou and I, by stream, by shore,
In song, in prayer, in sleep,
Have been as we may be no more—
Kind sister, let me weep!"

Then to her mother the Greek bride says:

"Mother! I leave thee! On thy breast,
Pouring out joy and woe,
I have found that holy place of rest
Still changeless! Yet I go.
Lips that have lulled me with your strain,
Eyes that have watched my sleep!
Will earth give love like *yours* again?
Sweet mother; let me weep."

The bride is then described as turning to her husband in these touchingly beautiful lines:

"And like a slight young tree, that throws
The weight of rain from its drooping boughs,
Once more she wept. But a changeful thing
Is the human heart, as a mountain spring
That works its way through the torrent's foam
To the bright pool near it, the lily's home!

It is well! the cloud on her soul that lay
Hath melted in glittering drops away.
Wake again; mingle sweet flute and lyre!
She turns to her lover. She leaves her sire.
Mother! on earth it must be so:
Thou rearest the lovely to see them go."

Shortly after the publication of "The Records of Women," Mrs. Hemans, partly on account of her sister's marriage and removal from Rhyllon, and partly because she wished to be nearer educational facilities for her sons, left Wales and fixed her residence at Wavertree, near Liverpool. This change of abode, with her growing popularity, brought her into personal communication with many minds eminent in the literary world. Her fame spread; her correspondents multiplied; society opened its doors to her; invitations to visit the seats of distinguished persons were given her. Accepting one of these, she went to Scotland, where she met Sir Walter Scott, who treated her with distinguishing attention. He invited her to visit him at Abbotsford, which she did, to her very great satisfaction and delight. In bidding her farewell when she left, he said to her:

"There are some whom we meet, and should like ever after to claim as kith and kin; and *you* are one of these." In writing of this visit to a friend,

she said: "It is delightful to take away with me so unmingled an impression of what I may now call almost affectionate admiration." Nor was Sir Walter the only noted personage in Scotland who treated her with such affectionate respect, for when she went to Edinburgh its most distinguished people showered upon her similar tokens of their regard.

On her return from Scotland, she wrought on her "Songs of the Affections," published in 1830. In June of this year she visited the lakes of Westmoreland, where she gained strength for her enfeebled body from its health-giving climate, and enjoyment for her mind from her intercourse with the patriarchal Wordsworth, who, she said, "treated me with so much consideration, gentleness, and care."

Wavertree was not favorable to the health of Mrs. Hemans. She also felt the need of some near relative to protect and advise her with respect both to her domestic affairs and the education of her sons. Her brother was filling a position of high responsibility in Ireland, and was anxious to do all that fraternal love could suggest to promote her welfare. Hence, in 1831, she bade farewell to Wavertree and to England, and established herself in the city of Dublin. Here she found ample opportunities for the education of her boys, introduc-

tion to the best society of the place, and in a very short time the warm friendship of Archbishop Whately, his amiable wife, and a number of other refined, congenial spirits. Mrs. Hemans had so many attractive qualities, that she never failed to win the strongest regard of every cultivated, serious mind to whose society she was introduced. Affectionate herself, she readily gained the affectionate admiration of kindred spirits.

The climate of Ireland was favorable for a short time to her health, which, however, after a few months, again became seriously impaired. The burdens of life had been too heavy for her delicate constitution. The grief caused by her husband's alienation and the death of her mother had slowly but surely dried up the sources of her energy. She had been stimulated to overtask both her physical and mental powers by the pecuniary necessities of her situation, having too often forced herself to work on her poems when nature required her to rest. She was now called on to pay the cost of all this in nervous prostrations and in painful weaknesses, which led her to write, "It is with me as if I felt, and more particularly heard, every thing with *unsheathed* nerves. There is this line in Coleridge:

'O! for a sleep for sleep itself to rest in!'

I believe I shall require some such quintessence of repose to restore me."

She was favored, however, at times with temporary returns of her former vigor, sufficient to allow of excursions to visit some of the most charming scenery of Ireland. She was able also in 1834 to superintend the publication of her "Hymns for Childhood" (which had appeared in America in 1827, but not in England), of "The National Lyrics" in a collected form, and of "Scenes and Hymns of Life." This latter volume a friendly critic in the *Atheneum* pronounced "her best work" and the opening of "a noble path." After reading this last remark she wrote: "My heart is growing faint. Shall I have power given me to tread that way much farther?"

This misgiving of her heart was prophetic. Her life-work was almost finished. Yet her active mind was still busy with literary projects which were never fulfilled. An attack of scarlet fever, which seized her when away from home, greatly reduced her strength. Next came the wasting decay of a malarial fever, then dropsy, followed by that gradual decay of her physical powers which is often nature's preparation for the coming of the death-angel.

In this exhausted state she was not uncomforted. She often said to Anna Creer, her faithful attendant, "I feel like a tired child—wearied and longing to be with the pure in heart."

At another time she said: "I feel as if I were sitting with Mary at the feet of my Redeemer, hearing the music of his voice and learning of him to be meek and lowly. . . . I am like a quiet babe at his feet, and yet my spirit is full of his strength. When any body speaks of his love to me, I feel as if he was too slow; my spirit can mount alone with him into those blissful realms with far greater rapidity!"

The poetic spirit and power remained with her to the last, as she showed when a Sabbath or two before she "fell asleep," she dictated this Sabbath sonnet:

"How many blessed groups this hour are bending,
Through England's primrose meadow-paths, their way
Toward spire and tower, 'midst shadowy elms ascending,
Whence the sweet chimes proclaim the hallowed day!
The halls, from old heroic ages gray,
Pour their fair children forth; and hamlets low,
With whose thick orchard blooms the soft winds play,
Send out their inmates in a happy flow,
Like a freed vernal stream; I may not tread
With them those pathways—to the feverish bed

Of sickness bound. Yet O, my God! I bless
Thy mercy, that with Sabbath peace hath filled
My chastened heart, and all its throbbings stilled
To one deep calm of lowliest thankfulness."

In this deep calm of a heart resting in the arms of the Father's everlasting love, our sweet singer, on the 16th of May, 1835, passed painlessly from the troubled life of earth to that life which is everlasting love and perfect rest.

Mrs. Hemans can not be ranked with poets of the highest class, but she stands among the first of England's minor poets. Her poetry is what Miss Jewsbury said Mrs. Hemans was in her womanhood, "exquisitely feminine." It is not abstractly intellectual, neither is it superficial. Its characteristic is the beautiful in history, scenery, character, and religion. It is, as Jeffrey said of it, "singularly sweet, elegant, and tender—touching, perhaps, and contemplative, rather than vehement and overpowering." It is, in brief, just such poetry as young ladies need to study, not for its pure thoughts alone, but also for its fitness to form the taste, furnish the imagination with images of the beautiful, fill the mind with lofty sentiments afford them innocent pleasure, and to kindle affection for "the right, the beautiful, and the true."

VIII.

The Misses Grimké.

"Is there nothing,
Nothing, my father, in the work of freedom
For woman's hands to do?"

—Sydney Yendys.

ONE November evening in 1837 there was not a little stir among the quiet citizens of the ancient village of Hingham, Massachusetts, because of a lecture to be given by a lady in the Unitarian Church, of which Mr. Brooks was then the pastor. The reputation of the lecturer, the novelty of a public address to a mixed audience from the lips of a woman, the exciting topic—slavery—had raised the feelings of the inhabitants to fever heat. The friends and foes of the anti-slavery movement were alike moved by curiosity to hear a woman speaker, and despite the prejudice of many against the cause, and of most

against what then appeared to be an unseemly thing for a lady to attempt, the spacious edifice was crowded at the appointed hour. Probably a large majority of that audience was predisposed to judge the expected orator unfavorably.

But that predisposition was wonderfully modified by the lady's appearance even before she uttered a word. Her tall, graceful figure, clad in Quaker-like garments, her dignified though modest bearing, her finely formed head, sharply chiseled features, beautiful complexion, and clear blue eyes at once disarmed many minds of resentful prejudice. And when she began to speak, her faultless modesty of manner, her intense feeling, her evident mastery of her theme, her intellectual strength, her grand appeals, and at times her almost Websterian eloquence, captured, if not the convictions, yet the sympathies of her audience. When Miss Angelina Grimké, for that was her name, sank back at the close of her oration, for such it was, exhausted by her effort, upon the sofa on the pulpit platform, she had not only won a goodly number to the cause she advocated, but had also dissolved the prejudices of many against the fitness of, at least, some women to speak in public. "If," said one of her hearers that evening, "every woman were as accomplished,

and as qualified in mind and manners as Angelina Grimké, I should not object to her public advocacy of such questions as the moral aspects of slavery; but then, there are very few women who have her qualifications for such work." And this probably expressed the opinion of the majority present at her lecture, on the still "vexed question" of woman's relation to public speaking.

Nearly fifty years have passed since Miss Angelina gave that lecture in Hingham. At that time her name, with that of her elder sister, Sarah, was a household word, especially in the Northern States. It is but little known to the young ladies of to-day, albeit a biography of both sisters has recently been given to the public.* The lives of these remarkable women have lessons for the young women of to-day, and for this reason the writer presents this brief sketch of their careers and characters.

The Grimké sisters were natives of Charleston, South Carolina. Their father was the Hon. John F. Grimké, who came of good Huguenot stock, and was a judge of the Supreme Court of South Caro-

* "The Grimké Sisters: Sarah and Angelina Grimké. The first American Women Advocates of Abolition and Woman's Rights." By Catherine C. Birney. The writer is indebted to this very entertaining volume for much of his materials for this sketch.

lina. Their mother could claim a highly respectable Puritan ancestry. Fourteen sons and daughters were born to them, of whom Sarah was the sixth, and Angelina the youngest. They were High Church Episcopalians. Their home was an abode of wealth and luxury; their social relations were of the most aristocratic type, and their numerous children were reared in the prevailing habits of what was regarded as the best society in Charleston. The sons were educated for professional life, but following the prevailing customs, the daughters were not taught solid learning, but only those ornamental branches which were requisite to their reputation in society as accomplished and fashionable women. There certainly was nothing, either in their education or surroundings, to beget in them that spirit of self-sacrificing philanthrophy which was the distinguishing feature of their womanhood. Least of all was there any thing to suggest their future emnity to the peculiar institution, inasmuch as their father was a slaveholder, they were served by slaves from their earliest infancy, and were never taught to think there was any taint of sin in claiming and using human beings as property, or, to cite the words of South Carolina law, as "chattels personal."

Their Huguenot and Puritan blood, however, revealed itself in their early tendency to think and decide for themselves, in their keen sense of natural justice, in their courageous love of truth, and in their tender sympathies with the oppressed. Sarah exhibited her independence by protesting against the superficial studies assigned her, and begging permission to study the classics and the law as her brothers did. But custom forbade this, and she was forced to be content with such instructions as were usually given young ladies of fashion. But neither their imperfect education, nor corrupt public opinion, could prevent the revolt of their tender feelings against the punishments commonly inflicted upon slaves, and also against the utter ignorance in which those poor creatures were designedly reared.

Catherine Birney tells us that Sarah, when only five years old, after seeing a slave woman cruelly whipped, sobbed as if heart-broken, and then ran from her nurse to the wharf and begged the captain of a vessel to take her from a city in which the whipping of women was permitted. The same tenderness of heart was shown by Angelina, who, on one occasion, stole out to the slave quarters with a bottle of oil with which to soothe the wounds of one of her father's slaves who had been whipped

that day. Thus the natural tenderness of both girls caused them to hate slavery long before their moral judgments had taught them the sinfulness of slaveholding. It was the germ of their subsequent devotion to the cause of human freedom.

Never, perhaps, were two sisters more closely bound to each other by sympathy and affection than were these Grimké sisters. Their strong and life-long sisterly love had its origin in somewhat exceptional circumstances. Sarah was twelve years old when Angelina was born. The presence of her baby-sister begot in her girlish heart a tenderness akin to that of a mother for her child. She begged to be permitted to stand at the baptismal font as godmother to the infant. This strange request, after many refusals, was finally granted, and this girl of twelve gave the promise required by the Episcopalian ritual, to train her infant sister in the ways of Christian duty. This promise, usually made without serious thought or purpose, had so much meaning for the juvenile godmother, that she carried it to God, with tears and prayers, asking fitness for the duty she had engaged to perform. Years after she wrote of her feelings at the time, saying: "O, how good I resolved to be, how careful in all my conduct, that my life might be blessed to her."

And it was; for never was sister-love more true, devoted, and lasting than in Sarah Grimké. And never was it more warmly reciprocated than by Angelina.

The home of these sisters, though affluent, and refined by culture, was nevertheless not a happy one. Their mother seems to have been unequal to the management of a large household in which the service was all performed by slaves. Hence came waste, disorder, irritation of temper, and chronic discontent. In Sarah's case, as she passed from girlhood into young womanhood, there was added the unrest of an unusually active and mature mind refused, in obedience to prevailing custom, the privilege of instruction in that solid learning for which she hungered. Her parents wished to make her, not a student, but a young lady of fashion; a drawing-room doll; a belle in the ball-room; a merry participant in the frivolous amusements of aristocratic society. She wished to be a scholar, and could not be satisfied with what the fashionable world offered her starving intellect.

To this hunger of the mind there was added in her seventeenth year the hunger of the heart. As stated above, her parents were Episcopalians, but do not appear to have been much more than devo-

tees to forms and ceremonies. Moreover, their construction of the Church creed was highly Calvinistic, and therefore narrow and unsatisfying. Sarah attended all the services and sacraments of the Episcopal Church, but was, as she wrote, insensible to spiritual feeling. Going one evening to a Presbyterian church, the words of the eloquent Rev. H. Kolloch were sharp arrows to her wounded heart, but did not win her from "scenes of dissipation and frivolity," in which she stifled the emotions she could not wholly suppress. A conversation with this devout minister, whom she met while away from home a year or two later, revived her convictions. Her father's long illness, during which she was his most faithful nurse, and his death, which was made peaceful by his late-born faith in Christ, intensified her desires for a manifestation of Christ to her almost despairing spirit. In Catherine Birney's interesting work the struggles of her strong mind with the comfortless dogmas of an unscriptural theology, and with the unsatisfactory conditions of her life, are given with considerable fullness. In these conflicts we see her turning, first to Universalism, which yielded no balm to her wounded spirit; then, while on a visit to North Carolina seeking to recover her health, which had given way

beneath the burden of her anguished mind, to Methodism, in which she found partial consolation, but did not fully accept, because its doctrines were not in harmony with the religious theories which had so confused her mind as to mislead her judgment. At last, influenced by a book presented to her by a Quaker, she accepted the theories of the Friends, and found as she vainly hoped, "a resting-place for her weary, sore-travailed spirit."

The mystic feature in Quakerism seems to have been the star of this false hope. Its doctrine of the "inward light," of God speaking directly to the heart, had a charm for her strong but misdirected mind. The beliefs in which she had been reared had given an interpretation to the Scriptures from which her sense of justice so revolted that she could not readily accept them as her guide. Her acquaintance with the doctrines of Methodism was too superficial and partial to replace her erroneous impressions. But by the fancied inner light of Quakerism she could read into Holy Writ such conceptions as her imagination suggested. Had she been more wisely taught in early life, had she grasped the fundamental truths of the Gospel, her ardent mind would have been satisfied to take the plain meaning of the Written Word as a sufficient

guide to duty, and thereby have escaped much suffering, and avoided the mistakes into which she was led by confounding the voice of her own heart with the voice of God. The Divine Spirit illuminates the mind and comforts the soul, but it speaks no word to the understanding other than what is to be found in the Holy Book.

Sarah's fancied inner life soon moved her to see visions, to commune with spirits, and to believe that it was her duty to be a minister among the Quakers. Those imaginary visions and spirits troubled her exceedingly, but not nearly so much as her supposed call to the ministry. From this call she shrank as from a threat of torture. Her sensitive modesty, her sense of womanly propriety, and the prejudices of her education, made it seem a crushing burden. Yet she resolved to begin the work at the Friends' meeting-house; but when the opportunity was within her reach, her tongue, paralyzed by fear, refused to speak. Again and again her resolution yielded to nervous timidity. She sat silent and wretched, for her imaginary inner light accused her of sinning against the Holy Ghost, and this false accusation haunted her like a ghost through several years—a sincere but unhappy victim of erroneous teaching!

Thus tempest-tossed by false impressions, made uncomfortable by the censures of family friends, who frowned upon her eccentricities, and panting for the sympathy of congenial minds, Sarah easily persuaded herself that the Lord required her to quit the home of her childhood and remove to Philadelphia. Hence in 1821 we find her domiciled at the house of a Friend, named Israel Morris, in the "City of Brotherly Love."

But what was the history of Angelina during these years? Lovingly nursed in infancy, petted in childhood, trained in early youth by her sister god-mother, Angelina very naturally imbibed her opinions and shared her feelings; albeit she was not so pliable as to accept the views even of her beloved sister, or of her Calvinistic mother, without seeing what seemed to be sufficient grounds for doing so. She was beautiful, gay, fashionable, yet respectful of religious forms. In disposition she was more cheerful, and in judgment more independent than her sister. Like Sarah she had "starved on the cold water of Episcopacy," and was convinced of sin under the preaching of a Presbyterian minister. Unlike Sarah, she had speedily found peace in believing, and her conceptions of the Gospel were such as filled her with joy in the Holy

Ghost. She was less self-reproachful, but more self-reliant, more self-assertive, and of more commanding presence than her sister. Yet she was like her, in that she did not remain long at rest with regard to the doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, under whose instructions she had found peace.

In 1827 the morbidly conscientious Sarah revisited Charleston, drawn hither partly because of her yearning desire to commune with her mother, her "precious Angelina," and her other sisters, and partly because she was fighting against an affection she had formed for a young Quaker who was desirous of making her his bride. The dear, mistaken girl was trying to persuade herself that it was her duty to crucify that natural, healthful, and innocent passion. She hoped that absence might dissolve the charm of love. She was never married.

During Sarah's stay in Charleston she communicated a very decided impulse to Angelina's mind toward Quakerism. Its mystic theory of the inner light captured the younger, as it had the elder sister. Its effect was soon seen in Angelina's abandonment of Presbyterian worship, of ornamental dress, of the family worship, and of all reading except of strictly religious books, and in her at least partial

surrender to what she fancied was the guidance of the inner light.

The result of all this was, as might be expected, that she gave great offense to her family, to the Church, and to the fashionable circle in which it had been her wont to shine. She was censured by her relatives, and ridiculed by society, as a very eccentric young lady, especially because she persisted in going to the little Quaker meeting-house, to sit in silence with the two elderly men who were its only attendants besides herself. This treatment, though it did not subdue her strong will, wounded her pride and stung her unbending spirit. After Sarah's return to Philadelphia she had no one to comfort her with sympathy, and the irritations of her mind produced such physical prostration that in 1828 she, too, went to Philadelphia to recruit her strength.

This visit had an important bearing on Angelina's destined work. Three months' companionship with her sister and her Quaker associates so strengthened her adhesion to their notions that she adopted the style of dress peculiar to that sect. Her consciousness of a call to be one of its ministers became more distinct. She also heard so much said on the slavery question, then strongly agitated in

the North, that her dislike of slave-holding, already very deep, was greatly intensified. Hence, on her return to Charleston she was more than ever pronounced in her Quaker peculiarities, in her rebukes of the ostentatious luxuries of her mother's house, and of the treatment of the family slaves. So much did she dwell upon the cruelties of the slave system, that her hatred of it became a passion. She wept at what she saw daily in her native city, and her swelling heart heaved with desire to be "the means of exposing the cruelty and injustice which was practiced in that institution of oppression; . . above all, of exposing the awful sin of professors of religion sending their slaves to the house of correction, and having them whipped, so that when they come out they can scarcely walk, or having them put upon the tread-mill until they are lamed for days afterwards."

Such thoughts and desires were the roots on which her subsequent labors in the anti-slavery crusade grew. They were burning thoughts, and became so unendurable that she could not willingly remain in a city where the spectacles which met her eyes almost daily, were as fuel to the torture they caused in her indignant soul. Moreover, the truth, hitherto unperceived, that slave-holding was sinful, began to dawn upon her, and she wrote in her

diary, "May it not be laid down as an axiom, that that system must be radically wrong which can only be supported by transgressing the laws of God?"

This perception which a false early education had heretofore kept hidden from her moral judgment, stimulated her to deeper and more painful feelings, and moved her to speak with boldness, not only to her relatives, but also to visitors. Such courageous expression of opinion in a city which regarded censure of slave-holding as little less than treason against the State, made her position less and less tolerable; and, therefore, in 1829, she forsook her native city and the home of her childhood, and joined her beloved Sarah in Philadelphia, where she could hope to enjoy liberty of speech, and live without being compelled to witness those acts of cruelty which had vexed her righteous soul.

The sisters now richly enjoyed each other's society, and engaging actively in works of charity, found abundant congenial occupation. Still they did not find Quakerism to be that sweet rest of mental repose which their free souls had expected. They had thought to find full liberty in it to obey the voice of their invisible guide. They found it to be a system of restraint, under which the will of the elders was practically superior to that voice

in the unofficial individual. They supposed that among the Friends gentleness and love excluded harsh authority and ungenerous sentiments. They found no small measure of uncharitableness and severity in the treatment meted out to them, especially to the more docile Sarah, whose aspirations as a minister were most unkindly checked, even so far that she was once openly commanded to be silent while in the act of speaking. But such was the strength of her adhesion to the sect, that Sarah would have borne such treatment unresistingly but for the more independent Angelina, whose bolder spirit resented every encroachment on her liberty of thought and action. Both sisters were loyal to the principles of the Society, but they practically dissented from some of the details imposed by the elders on its members. Angelina, despite their requirements, would read papers and books not approved by them. She would attend other than Quaker assemblies. Hence, after a short time, she began to grow away from strict Quakerism, and gradually influenced Sarah in the same direction. Quakerism was too narrow for a woman possessing such activity and strength of mind, such marked individuality, and such large desires to achieve something for humanity as belonged to Angelina.

In the exercise of her self-asserted liberty of action, Angelina, disregarding the advice of the elder Friends, went, in 1835, to hear that eloquent philanthropist, George Thompson, and other anti-slavery orators. Their words fell upon her long-cherished humane sympathies like sparks on dry tinder, and kindled her desire to do what she could to promote the then despised movements in behalf of crushed humanity in the Southern States. She knew that to identify herself openly with the then unpopular anti-slavery agitation would offend her Quaker friends, grieve her beloved sister, and exasperate her relatives in the South. In presence of these certain consequences she hesitated, prayed, and pondered long and deeply, saying in her heart, "What shall I do? what shall I do?"

At last, in August, 1835, an appeal to the citizens of Boston, from the fiery pen of William Lloyd Garrison, protesting against the mobs which disturbed the meetings in which George Thompson was the chief orator, inspired her to write Mr. Garrison a letter of sympathy. This letter was a strong and eloquent production. It was as the voice of a grandly heroic soul. It declared emancipation to be "a cause worth dying for." Its tone delighted Mr. Garrison, who printed it with

approving comments in the *Liberator*, in which he called special attention to Angelina's high Southern connections, and the opportunities her early life had afforded her for studying the institution she condemned.

The publication of her letter was a surprise to Angelina, and it brought down a storm of disapproval upon her head from all sides. She met this storm with the courage she had displayed in her letter. Only her sister's grief disturbed her affectionate spirit. Sarah, though hostile to the cruelties of slavery from her childhood, was not yet sufficiently alive to its sinfulness to join a crusade for its destruction. She even fancied that her more energetic sister was "given over to blindness of mind," and did not know "light from darkness, right from wrong." But Angelina had no doubt about the path she had entered being the right one. With her the only question was as to whither it led; what specific part heaven wished her to take in the grand anti-slavery drama!

The story of her mental perplexities is well told by Catherine Birney. These continued several months, until one morning she entered the breakfast-room of Mrs. Parker, with whom she was then visiting, in Shrewsbury, New Jersey, her face

beaming with the brightness of a mind relieved from doubt, as she exclaimed:

"It has all come to me. God has shown me what I can do. I can write an appeal to Southern women. . . . I will speak to them in such tones that they *must* hear me, and through me the voice of justice and humanity."

With the promptitude of a lofty enthusiasm born of genuine conviction, she began her proposed task at once. After writing a few pages she received a letter from the Secretary of the American Anti-slavery Society, inviting her to New York, to meet with Christian women in private parlors, and talk to them on slavery.

This invitation was a flash of brighter light upon the hitherto misty path she had entered. Yet it startled her. Though impressed long before that she was called to be a minister among the Friends, yet she had not hitherto addressed any such public assembly as she was now invited to do. She hesitated, delayed her reply, wrote to Sarah for counsel, prayed for divine direction, and held the question in abeyance until she finished her appeal.

When it was prepared she sent her manuscript to the Anti-slavery Society in New York. Its adaptation to its purpose, its eloquence, the felicity

of its style, the fervor of its tone, its telling facts, and the strength of its indictment against the peculiar institution, impressed the committee so deeply that they at once put it to press, and speedily sent it broadcast over the country. It produced "the most profound sensation wherever it was read," Catherine Birney justly remarks. In Charleston it was publicly burned; and when it was rumored that its author was about to visit her mother, the police were instructed to prevent her landing. The mayor also told her mother that if she came hither it would be impossible for him to protect her from the violence of a mob. O, chivalric Carolinians! Angelina would have defied mob violence and gone to Charleston, but unwilling to put her family in peril, she wisely refrained from making her intended visit.

The Friends in Philadelphia, who were then hostile to the anti-slavery movement, were deeply offended with Angelina for giving this heart-stirring pamphlet to the world. Sarah, though grieved because of its injury to her sister's influence in the Society, was, nevertheless, not offended. She was, in fact, gradually growing into Angelina's spirit. The Friends themselves promoted that growth by their arbitrary treatment of both sisters. And

when, after proposing to go to New England, to speak among Friends only upon the duty of using none but goods produced by free labor, and being advised not to go thither, Angelina decided to accept the invitation of the New York Committee. Sarah resolved to accompany her, saying, "We have wept and prayed together; we will go and work together." As their purpose was not likely to be approved by the Society, it practically severed the sisters from their obligation to observe their rules. The attempt "to ingraft these scions of the Charleston aristocracy upon the rugged stock of Quaker orthodoxy," as Miss Birney observes, proved to be futile.

Our noble pair of sisters, isolated from their Quaker friends, soon found themselves in friendly relation with men and women of broader minds, higher culture, and more generous sympathies. With characteristic independence they refused the offer of salaries, and proposed to pay their own expenses, as they were able to do, they having each inherited the sum of ten thousand dollars from their father's estate, the interest of which sums was sufficient to cover the cost of their simple modes of dress and plain manner of living.

Before beginning their proposed work in New York, the sisters attended an anti-slavery conven-

tion in that city, at which the eloquent Theodore D. Weld took a very prominent part. To both sisters it was a rich and profitable occasion. To Sarah it proved such a stimulant, that she at once wrote an "Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States," which, when published, was accepted as a very effective argument against the theories of clerical apologists for slave-holding. Being freed from the repressive spirit of Quakerism, the true heart of that excellent woman moved her to cast the full weight of her really great ability into freedom's scale.

After the convention the Female Anti-slavery Society held its first quarterly-meeting in New York, for the purpose of listening to the two sisters. Their purpose had been to speak only in parlors, but their presence in the convention had produced so favorable an impression that it was obvious no parlor would hold the numbers sure to attend. Therefore the session-room of a Baptist church was announced as the place of meeting. It was not only a novelty, but an objectionable act, in those days for a woman to speak in a public place, even to an assembly of women. The Quakers in New York were shocked by the announcement, and not a few Abolitionists thought it scarcely a proper thing to encourage. Rumors of these hostile views

reached the ears of the shrinking sisters, and they trembled at being called "two bold Southern women." But prayer and the sympathy of good men encouraged them to go to the session-room. There they found some three hundred women. Prayer was offered by a Mr. Ludlow; a few words of welcome were given them by Mr. Dunbar, the pastor of the church; and then, the two gentlemen having modestly retired, Angelina spoke with good effect for forty minutes without the least embarrassment. Sarah followed with impressive remarks. The ladies present requested that another meeting should be held. Thus these two heroic sisters crossed the Rubicon of an adverse public opinion, and began that brief but brilliant career of public speaking, by which they doubtless contributed very materially to the diffusion of correct information concerning slavery as it actually was, and to the progress of the great anti-slavery movement in the North.

In these days of our familiarity with the fact of women addressing large audiences of both men and women on questions of religion and reform, one is amused when told that at this first appearance of the Misses Grimké before an assembly of ladies, a curious but friendly gentleman having quietly crept

into the sessions-room was, when discovered, requested to withdraw. No wonder, when Theodore D. Weld was told this ludicrous incident, that he exclaimed, "How supremely ridiculous, to think of a man being shouldered out of a meeting for fear he should hear a woman speak!"

The dignified manners and tender eloquence of these good women struck a chord of sympathy in the hearts of many ladies, who, as the fame of the fair Carolinians spread, crowded to hear them in such numbers that it became necessary to hold their meetings in the church. After addressing numerous assemblies in New York, the sisters visited several towns in New Jersey, where they were equally well received; as they were also in the cities of Hudson and Poughkeepsie, on the North River. Then their oratorical fame spread far and wide. Invitations poured in upon them from many quarters. Boston anti-slavery women called for their presence and labors. They obeyed this summons, spoke in many places, and always created convictions and stimulated rational enthusiasm for the cause of liberty in their hearers. At first they spoke to females only, but as their reputation spread a few gentlemen began to steal into their meetings uninvited; yet being tolerated their numbers grew,

until, in July, 1837, the sisters spoke in Lynn, Massachusetts, to a mixed audience of at least a thousand persons. The gentlemen then present were so astonished and delighted with their powerful oratory that they insisted on hearing them again. At their next address the edifice was overcrowded.

Their success as speakers to mixed assemblies roused opposition. The enemies of the emancipation movement, clergymen who felt that it was an innovation not to be tolerated for women to speak to promiscuous gatherings, and even many true-hearted anti-slavery men, were offended. The enemies of the cause spoke and wrote wrathfully, while not a few of its friends were grieved. For a time a storm raged round the heads of these devoted ladies. But their sense of duty held them to their work. As fast as the doubting friends of the cause heard them they were won to their side, being disarmed of prejudice by that perfect propriety of manner and speech which gave character to their performances, albeit many of them were not convinced of either the wisdom or fitness of much that was said and done at that time by the agitation which grew out of their action on the vexed question of so-called "Woman's Rights." The Misses

Grimké were ladies of lofty character, gifted with extraordinary endowments, and could usefully do a work which if attempted by women of inferior characters and abilities would neither elevate the sex nor promote any good cause. Since the world began God has anointed a succession of prophets, but only now and then has he called a woman to be prophetess.

It is highly creditable to the judgment of these sisters that, although misled for a brief season by the persuasions of William L. Garrison, H. C. Wright, and a few others, and inclined to force their pet notions on woman's rights, non-resistance, no-government, etc., on the anti-slavery cause, they soon yielded to the arguments of Whittier, T. D. Weld, H. B. Stanton, and other judicious counselors, and ceased their efforts in that direction. For this they were unsparingly censured by Garrison and those who idolized him. Of this treatment Sarah wrote: "They were exhibiting in the high places of moral reform the genuine spirit of slave-holding." Of Garrison she writes very justly: "His spirit of intolerance toward those who did not draw in his traces, and his adulation of those who surrendered themselves to his guidance, have always been very repulsive to me." In this opinion Miss Grimké

was doubtless right. In his treatment of opponents Garrison thought he was acting on principle; but, unconsciously, perhaps, he was too despotic to "let others be themselves."

The public labors of the Grimké sisters culminated in Boston, in 1838, when Angelina spoke twice in the halls of the Massachusetts Legislature before a committee of that body, appointed to consider the "petitions on the subject of slavery." As she stood in the place of the speaker of the House, in presence of a vast crowd which more than filled the hall, her heart which, as she wrote, "had never quailed before, almost died within her at that tremendous hour." "The best culture and character," said Wendell Phillips, "was there; and the profound impression then made on a class not often found in anti-slavery meetings, was never wholly lost. . . The converts she made needed no after-training. When she was opening some secret record of her own experience, the painful silence and breathless interest told the deep effect and lasting impression her words were making."

After speaking twice before that committee, the sisters appeared in the Odeon, where Sarah lectured once, and Angelina five times, to audiences of perhaps two thousand souls, whose frequent bursts of

applause illustrated the marvelous power of these eloquent daughters of South Carolina. With her lecture in the Odeon Sarah's public labors ended, her throat being so seriously diseased as to compel retirement and rest. Angelina spoke but once more. A few weeks later she was married in Philadelphia to Theodore D. Weld. Invited to speak in Pennsylvania Hall, then just dedicated, but at the moment threatened by a furious mob, she appeared there, "the bride of three days," says Catherine Birney; "and so great was the effect of her pure, beautiful presence, and quiet, graceful manner, that in a few moments the confusion within the hall subsided." Yet during her burning speech the mob within the doors yelled and shouted, while the mob without hurled showers of stones through the windows across the hall. Nothing daunted, without the slightest change of color, she spoke on for an hour, and when she had finished the applause of the audience drowned the yells of the mob. This was her last speech, her nervous system being so impaired by an accident shortly after, that she was never again competent to endure the excitement and exertion of public speaking. Henceforth she was able to serve the cause she loved so truly only with her able, fervid pen.

The scope of this sketch forbids us to attempt any description of the simple, busy, self-denying, self-sacrificing, unique, beautiful, and happy lives these loving sisters and Mr. Weld lived in their modest homes, first at Fort Lee, next at Belleville, then at Eagleswood, New Jersey, and finally at Hyde Park, near Boston. The pleasing story is well told by Catherine Birney, in her exceedingly interesting book. It must suffice here to say that Miss Grimké died December 23, 1873, at Hyde Park, and Mrs. Weld followed her to the mansions of rest October 26th, 1879. They were both rarely good women, alike in many of their idiosyncrasies, yet unlike in others. Both suffered through lack of educational training suited to their naturally strong, active, resolute, impulsive minds. Perhaps the uncertainties, changes, and final peculiarities of their religious beliefs had their origin chiefly in this lack. Both were charitable and self-sacrificing to the last degree. Both possessed a strong sense of justice, an uncommonly acute conscientiousness, and a courage that was fearless of the consequences of doing right. Of the two, Angelina had the quicker perception; but in reasoning both were apt to seize on generalizations too broad for the facts on which they were based. Both were somewhat

eccentric. Both had great strength of will, but Angelina's character was the stronger of the two, the more prompt to decide, the more forward to act, the more magnetic in its action upon other minds. Both were good, pure, noble, honorable women, not faultless, yet in many things models for the imitation of the young women of to-day.

IX.

Caroline Lucretia Herschel.

"The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them. Sloth and folly
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
And make the impossibility they fear." —Rowe.

IN the month of January, 1848, the body of a lady who had lived to be nearly ninety-eight years old was borne into the grave-yard, at Hanover, Germany, followed by a long procession of mourners. Royal carriages were there, as evidences that the court honored the memory of the dead. Garlands of laurel, cypress, and palm branches, sent by the crown princess from Herrnhausen, covering her coffin, showed that she, too, shared in the affectionate regard of the reigning monarch for the deceased lady. The following inscription, written by the departed lady shortly before her death, and subsequently placed over her grave,

shall inform the reader who she was, and to what her long life had been devoted:

"Here rests the earthly exterior of CAROLINE LUCRETIA HERSCHEL, born at Hanover, March 16, 1750, died January 9, 1848. The eyes of her who is glorified were here below turned to the starry heavens. Her own discoveries of comets, and her participation in the immortal labors of her brother, William Herschel, bear witness of this to future ages. The Royal Irish Academy, of Dublin, and the Royal Astronomical Society, of London, enrolled her name among their members."

The reputation of this lady was not the blossoming of her own discoveries, though she was herself a highly gifted astronomer, but of her marvelous sister-love. She had chosen so to merge her life into that of her brother as partly to justify what she said of herself in her old age, namely: "I am nothing. I have done nothing. All I am, all I know, I owe to my brother. I am only the tool which he shaped to his use; a well-trained puppy-dog would have done as much."

Our sketch will show that she, doubtless, owed her musical and astronomical knowledge to her noble brother's teaching. It will also show that in calling herself his "tool," she was underrating herself. Her love was moving her to exalt him at her own expense, for she was neither a passive tool nor

a "well-trained puppy-dog," but a woman of rare genius, who was in strong intellectual sympathy with his pursuits, and whose marvelous sister-love moved her to subordinate her own ambitions to those of her brother; to find her pleasure, not in seeking celebrity for herself, but in contributing to his, and to rejoice in his successes as if they were her own. Could she but see him shine as a luminary in the world of science, she was content to sit in the light of his reputation. For this rare degree of beautiful sisterly affection the world admired and still admires her, and will always rank her with such devoted sisters as Dorothy Wordsworth and Mary Lamb.

The child-life of Caroline Herschel was not, on the whole, a happy one. Her father was a hautboy-player in the band of the Guards, and a skilled musician. Hence his family was subject to the vicissitudes of military life, and, during the "Seven Years' War," to serious discomforts growing out of the occupation of Hanover by the victorious French for nearly two years. These adversities of the kingdom often reduced the Herschel family to great straits. Peace brought easier times. Caroline's two eldest brothers, by their early display of musical talents, then found employment in the court

orchestra, and thereby brought such good cheer into the home circle, that Caroline, writing of her early days, said: "It made me so happy to see them so happy"—a remark, by the way, which shows that Caroline was gifted in her childhood with that unselfish disposition which, in her mature years, enabled her to find enjoyment in her brother's success.

On one occasion, when Caroline's father and her brother William had arrived in Hanover with their regiment, from foreign service, her mother gave her permission to go to the parade to meet them. The day was cold, the streets crowded. The little girl, unable to find her friends, wandered about until she was very nearly frozen. At last, she returned to her home, where she found the family at dinner. So delighted were they over the return of the father and brother, that no one had noticed Caroline's absence. The first to greet her was William. "My dear brother William," she wrote in her "Early Recollections," "threw down his knife and fork, ran to welcome me, and crouched down to me, which made me forget all my grievances." Even at that early age her love for her brother William was so strong that his smile was her childish heaven.

Caroline's girl-life was not spent in idle pastimes. She was at the military school every day until three o'clock. From her studies there she went to another school, to learn knitting. When she had acquired this simple art she was kept busy out of school hours knitting stockings for her brothers. Stockings so long that they reached from her chin to the floor! She was also made to wait at table when her exacting brother Jacob was at home. And he was so unkind as to give her "many a whipping for being awkward." Besides these employments she wrote letters to the absent ones, for her mother and for the neighbors, and was, consequently, if not a family drudge, yet a very busy child.

When she was ten years old her father left the army, broken down by the hardships of his soldier's life. He then became a teacher of music, and Caroline was one of his most ready pupils, until a year later typhus fever so reduced her strength that, she writes, "for several months I was obliged to mount the stairs on my hands and feet like an infant."

When Caroline's strength returned, her mother, much against the wish of her father, instead of keeping her at school, compelled her to drudge like a servant, both in the kitchen and with her needle.

Not that she was opposed to education in itself, but because two of her sons being musically educated had been tempted to seek employment in England, and she feared that if Caroline became a superior scholar, she too might leave her natal home. This drudgery, with grief over the continued absence of her best-beloved brother, clothed the girl's spirits with gloom, which became "a kind of stupefaction" when her father died, as he did when she was seventeen years old.

That Caroline might acquire sufficient skill to support herself, if need should arise, by her needle, Mrs. Herschel now sent her as an apprentice to a fashionable milliner and dress-maker, but resolutely refused to let her study French and music, as she wished to do, in order that she might qualify herself to fill the place of a governess. In all this the mother was blameworthy. Out of a selfish desire to keep her daughter from going to England as two of her sons had done, she strove to repress the development of her mental powers. Happily the maiden's genius would not yield itself wholly to this unwise mother's measures. Knowing that it was her brother William's wish to have her with him in England, that he might train her to assist him in his concerts and musical pursuits, she, while

not refusing to perform her household tasks, did her utmost when her mother was from home to cultivate her voice for singing the solo parts of concert music.

When Caroline was twenty-two her brother William set her free from these restraints by settling an annuity upon her mother sufficient to pay the expense of a personal attendant to fill her place in the household; and then, with her mother's reluctant consent, taking her with him to England. Thus, despite her unmotherly efforts, the event Mrs. Herschel dreaded as an evil came to pass, and her daughter fell into the place for which nature had fitted her.

When Caroline arrived in England her brother's home was in Bath, its most fashionable watering-place. In that gay city he had acquired reputation as a teacher and composer of music. He was also the popular director of the public concerts, patronized by the royal and aristocratic visitors who spent the "season" there. But while music was his visible profession, the real work of his life, the thing he pursued with passionate affection, was the study of the heavens. He was a music-master only that he might acquire means and have leisure to invent better astronomical instruments than any then in

use. Dissatisfied with what astronomers already knew, he aimed to be an explorer among the stars, a discoverer of worlds hitherto unrevealed to the eyes of men. To achieve this worthy end, he was at this time secretly toiling to construct a more powerful telescope than the opticians of the past had been able to produce. He was beginning that long series of mechanical labors, of which "the mirror for the mighty forty-foot telescope was the crowning result."

If Miss Herschel had dreamed of her brother's residence as a luxurious Castle of Indolence, her dream would have been swiftly dissolved on her arrival within its walls. But she probably had indulged in no such dreaming. Her mind was practical, and not poetical. Her early life, as we have seen, had been a life of drudging toil, but little brightened by recreation or the sympathies of demonstrative family affections. Most likely in going to Bath she thought of little else than of becoming the companion of the brother she most fondly loved, and of doing what might be in her power to contribute to his prosperity and happiness.

It was well, both for herself and her brother, that she had this practical turn of mind. Had she been frivolous, self-indulgent, fond of admiration, a

lover of amusements, and dependent on society for the enjoyment of her daily life, she would have been an unhappy woman in her brother's busy home. But, looking on life as she did, with the eye of sound common sense, she accepted things as she found them, without complaining of their hardships. And they were hard in many respects. She had much, almost every thing, indeed, to learn. The second morning after her arrival her brother began giving her lessons in English, in arithmetic, and in keeping a book account of her marketing, and other household transactions. He also talked to her about astronomy, tried her voice, and being satisfied that it only needed culture to be effective in concerts and oratorios, he at once put her under a course of training which demanded several hours of time every day.

He also installed her as the manager of his household, which, having heretofore been in the hands of a "hot-headed old Welsh woman," was in a sadly disarranged and dirty condition. Knowing but little English, and nothing of English customs, yet having all the marketing to do, Caroline found it no easy task to deal with butchers, bakers, fishwomen, and hucksters. Her brother's time was so completely occupied that she seldom saw him except

at meals, and when he was giving her lessons. Her inability to speak English made it impossible for her to enter into society. Her correspondence from the home circle was tinged with sorrowful accounts of the death of her sister's husband, and of her disconsolate condition with six fatherless children dependent upon her. No wonder, therefore, that she tells us of her social loneliness, saying: "I was entirely left to myself;" and "I had to struggle against homesickness and low spirits." But for her deep sister-love for William her life in Bath would have been unendurable.

Miss Herschel was not a faint-hearted, vacillating damsel, but a hopeful, persevering woman. Hence we soon find her in demand as a singer of songs and glees at her brother's evening parties, given during the season. At the close of the season her brother, now desperately busy on his new telescope, made large demands on her time for assistance. He turned the whole house, even to one of its bedrooms, into a workshop, in which cabinet-work was going on, and a lathe kept running, making patterns, grinding glasses and eye-pieces. In the midst of these unpoetical proceedings, Caroline had to continue her practice for the concerts of the ensuing Winter.

Both her musical capacity and her energy find illustration in the fact that seven years after her arrival in England she was able to take leading parts in a public presentation of those grand oratorios, the "Messiah," and "Judas Maccabeus." She rendered the songs and recitations assigned her so well, that she was highly complimented, not only by her friends, but also by such high-born dames as the Marchioness of Lothian, and other titled ladies, who were particularly struck with the correctness of her pronunciation of English words, and with the elegance of her manners. So marked was her vocal ability, that she was made first singer at the concerts of the following year. She was then offered an engagement at what was called the "Birmingham Festival," but declined because of her determination not to sing in public, except in concerts conducted by her brother.

It was now apparent that Miss Herschel might, by further persistent culture, win a national reputation and abundant support as a singer. She might, if she chose, make herself independent in temporalities of her brother. But this was not her choice. Her life was too closely linked to his to permit a wish to shine in her own light. Hence, when his astronomical reputation brought him

the means of self-support, and he abandoned his musical pursuits, as he did in 1782, Miss Caroline also bade adieu to her promising prospects as a singer, and devoted herself to astronomical studies, that she might become his effective and life-long assistant. Was ever sister more disinterested in her devotion to a brother than Caroline Herschel?

Miss Herschel's connection with her brother William's astronomical studies was brought about through the instability of her brother Alexander, who, though abundantly capable, was not sufficiently persevering to be an assistant upon whom he could depend. He would not give himself to the continued labor required. Hindered in his observations by this fault in Alexander, he turned to Caroline, who responded to his call with alacrity. With inexhaustible patience she copied his long catalogues of stars, his tedious astronomical tables, by day, and set herself at night when he was making telescopic observations to the regulation of his lamp micrometer; the keeping up of a fire when necessary; and when his watching was long continued, to the preparation of a cup of coffee for his refreshment. Of these tasks she wrote: "I undertook with pleasure what others might have thought

a hardship." Doubtless these were very trying tasks, but her sister-love made them seem easy to her.

William's enthusiastic devotion to his work led him to suffer his willing sister to toil at a very unfeminine task while he was preparing to cast a mirror for his projected thirty-foot telescope. It had to be cast "in a mold of loam, prepared from horse-dung, pounded in a mortar, and sifted through a fine sieve." "It was an endless piece of work," she wrote, "and served me for many an hour's exercise. Alec frequently took his turn at it, for we were all eager to do something toward the great undertaking." This prolonged pounding of such offensive material must have been very repugnant to Caroline's sensibilities; yet she did it with more than cheerfulness, because of her absorbing interest in her brother's pursuits. She felt amply repaid when she witnessed the favor with which the greatest scientific minds in England now began to regard her brother; when the king and queen invited him to their royal abode; when he was appointed royal astronomer, with a salary of one thousand dollars per annum, and especially when the sum of ten thousand dollars was provided to enable him to finish his thirty-foot telescope.

Caroline was thirty-three years of age when her

brother gave her a small telescope, called a "finder," with which she was to sweep the heavens in search of comets during the many nights on which, at this time, he was from home in attendance on his royal patron, or at the meetings of distinguished men of science. She found little to cheer her at first in this lonely work, which had to be done on starlight nights, "on a grass-plot, covered with dew or hoar-frost, without a human being near enough to be within call." Moreover, she was as yet so ignorant of the starry heavens as to be dependent on an atlas for finding what the objects were which she saw, and which she was required to describe. But when her brother returned and praised her work, which contained a list of fourteen clusters of stars, which she had duly catalogued, she was highly gratified, and felt repaid for all the discomforts of her nightly toil.

After his return she became the attendant of his labors on the telescope. She ran to the clocks, wrote memoranda, fetched and carried instruments, measured the ground with poles, re-measured the double stars with the micrometers, and when not thus engaged continued her sweepings in search of comets. There was peril as well as hardship in some of these duties. On the last night of December, 1783, for example, the clouds having dispersed

about ten o'clock, she and her brother hurried out to take an observation. Mr. Herschel, on taking his place in front of his instrument, called Caroline to alter its lateral motion. It was dark, and the ground was covered with melting snow a foot deep. In approaching the machinery which regulated the motion of the telescope, she did not notice a tenter-hook which was fastened to the end of the machinery. Consequently she fell upon it, and it entered her right leg above the knee.

"Make haste!" cried her brother, wondering why the telescope did not move.

"I am hooked!" was her pitiful response.

Rushing to her assistance, with the workman who was with him, he lifted her from her painful position, but, she writes, "not without leaving nearly two ounces of my flesh behind."

The workman's wife was summoned, but was too nearly paralyzed with fright to render any valuable aid. Hence she had to bandage the wound with her handkerchief, and treat it as best she could. She suffered much, and for six weeks her physician was uncertain whether or not he could save the limb. But the wound healed at last, and she comforted herself for all this suffering by being told that, owing to the clouds which returned after

her accident, and for several nights following, "her brother was no loser through this accident." What admirable self-forgetfulness is implied in this!

In 1786 Miss Herschel was richly rewarded for her nights spent in sweeping the heavens, by her discovery of a comet. Her brother was absent in Germany at the time, setting up a telescope which he had made by order of the King of England for a German prince. Desiring no respite, the indefatigable Caroline had been spending her days writing up catalogues and tables, and in overlooking the preparations being made at Slough, their residence at this time, for completing a forty-foot telescope. The nights, when clear, had been spent with her "finder" counting the nebulæ. On the night of the 1st of August she thought she saw a comet. The next night she was able to write with confidence: "The object I saw last night *is a comet!*" She was delighted, and wrote at once an account of her discovery to two distinguished astronomers. Guided by her descriptions, they and other students of the starry heavens found it also. Alexander Aubert, Esq., wrote her, saying:

"I wish you joy, most sincerely, on the discovery. I am more pleased than you can well conceive, that *you* have made it; and I think I see

your wonderfully clever and wonderfully amiable brother, upon the news of it, shed a tear of joy. You have immortalized your name. You deserve such a reward from the Being who has ordered all these things to move as we find them, for your assiduity in the business of astronomy, and for your love for so celebrated and deserving a brother."

Success, while it gratified her love of the approval of those she loved and respected, did not relax either her scientific zeal or her diligence in furthering the work of her now illustrious brother. In 1787 she had the further satisfaction of being officially recognized as her brother's assistant, with a salary of two hundred and fifty dollars a year. On receiving her first quarterly payment she wrote: "This is the first money I ever thought myself at liberty to spend to my own liking. A great uneasiness was by this means removed from my mind, for, though I had been almost the keeper of my brother's purse, with a charge to provide for my personal wants, . . . yet, when cast up, the sums I had taken for this purpose only amounted to thirty-five or forty dollars a year, since the time we left Bath," six years ago. O, simple-minded, economical, conscientious Caroline Herschel!

In the following year William Herschel was

married, and his sister was thereby relieved of the care of keeping her brother's house. But this relief did not reconcile her to the fact of his marriage, which, very naturally and properly, placed the wife first in the husband's affections. It mattered not that the wife was gentle, amiable, friendly, and by no means jealous of the supreme place which Caroline had held in her husband's regard. His marriage grieved her exceedingly; and it is supposed that she did not hesitate to give expression to her grief in her journal for the ensuing ten years, inasmuch as when time and the affectionate attentions of the sister-in-law had dissipated her grief, she destroyed that tell-tale record, lest it should give needless pain to survivors.

Miss Herschel's regrets did not quench either her devotion to her brother's service or her zeal for her own scientific studies. Though she quitted his home when his wife became its mistress, and lived henceforth in lodgings, she did not cease to be his assistant, nor to sweep the heavens with her telescope in search of more comets. "Before the end of 1797," says her biographer, "she had announced the discovery of eight comets, to five of which the priority of her claim over other observers is unquestioned."

These faithful labors she continued with unremitting diligence until her brother's death in 1822. The celebrity of Sir William, and her own reputation, brought her into frequent contact with distinguished scientists, and even with many royal personages during the last decade of her life in England. She was also persuaded to pay occasional visits to the homes of her most intimate friends, and thereby to break up in some small measure the laborious monotony of her life. But her brother's health, undermined by his excessive labors, prosecuted with little remission in the night, at all seasons, in cold and heat for years, began in 1819 to excite her anxieties. Her own uncommon vigor also began to give way, and a severe attack of fever brought her to the gates of death. She, however, rallied, and resumed her accustomed tasks. But Sir William, after struggling heroically with disease for some three years, became the victim of the death angel on the 25th of August, 1822, "when," she wrote, "not one comfort was left to me but that of retiring to the chamber of death, there to ruminate without interruption on my isolated situation." Alas, poor lady! the light of her life was extinguished.

Miss Herschel was now "heart-broken and desolate." "All she had of love to give had been

concentrated on her brother." With him she had also lost the occupation which, for nearly half a century, had occupied her time and filled her thoughts. "I am a person," she said, "who has nothing more to do in the world." Then, in the agony of her heart, she resolved to quit the land which she had loved only for her brother's sake, and go back to her native city. Having in the first moments of her great sorrow made this really unwise resolution, she set about her preparations at once. Only two days after his burial we find her selecting "the books and clothing" she meant to take with her. Two weeks later she is disposing of her furniture, settling with her landlord, etc. After this we see her taking "an everlasting leave" of her friends. On the 18th of October she is on board a "steam-packet," bound to Rotterdam, and ten days later she is in "the habitation of her brother Dietrich, at Hanover," where she hoped to find consolation for her wounded affections in the kindly sympathies of her relatives.

It was a vain hope, destined to bear little else than the thistle disappointment. She found her few living relatives proud of her brother's fame and of her celebrity, but not one of them could appreciate her truly wonderful sister-love, or enter into

her views of life. Fifty years had passed since she left her native city. She was no longer the damsel of twenty-two, but an old lady of seventy-two. Time had wrought great changes both in her and in them. They had plodded along in a sphere of commonplace respectability, and not within the radiance of a mind illuminated by brilliant genius, as she had done. She had, therefore, grown away from their range of thought. She had formed habits very unlike theirs; her ideas were not theirs, and they could not be led to adopt them. Hence, despite the kindly intentions of her relatives and friends, they could not satisfy the craving of the old lady's heart for something, if not to replace, yet fully to sympathize with that affection into which all her life had been freely poured. No wonder, therefore, that shortly after her arrival in Hanover, we hear her crying like one in distress, "Why did I leave happy England?" No wonder as she turned her thoughts more and more, as the years sped on, to her brother's only son and his family, giving to them somewhat of the love so long and so exclusively given to her beloved brother, that she often repeated that cry of deep regret during the twenty-six years which passed before her long life ended!

The first months after her return to Hanover she employed herself in completing a catalogue previously begun of all the star clusters and nebulæ observed by her brother in his "sweeps." Of this valuable piece of work Sir David Brewster said: "It is a work of immense labor, an extraordinary monument of the unextinguished ardor of a lady of seventy-five in the cause of abstract science."

For this catalogue the Royal Astronomical Society voted her its gold medal in 1828, and elected her "to the extraordinary distinction of an honorary membership." In the "Address," made at the time of the presentation of the medal, J. South, Esq., after enumerating the vast and valuable labors of Sir William Herschel, asked: "Who participated in his toils? Who braved with him the inclemency of the weather? Who shared his privations? A female. Who was she? His sister. Miss Herschel it was who, by *night*, acted as his amanuensis. She it was whose pen conveyed to paper his observations as they fell from his lips. . . . She it was who, having passed the night near the instrument, took the rough manuscripts to her cottage at the dawn of day, and produced a fair copy of the night's work on the following morning. She it was who planned the labor of each succeeding night. She

it was who reduced every observation, made every calculation. She it was who arranged every thing in systematic order; and she it was who helped him to obtain his imperishable name." Then, after describing Miss Herschel's independent discoveries of eight comets, and of many nebulæ, Mr. South added: "Indeed, in looking at the joint labors of these extraordinary personages, we scarcely know whether most to admire the intellectual power of the brother or the unconquerable industry of the sister."

With the finishing of the above-named catalogue Miss Herschel's astronomical labors ended. Henceforth she lived in great simplicity, yet comfortably, on an annuity left her by her brother. She spent her time in receiving the many distinguished visitors who called to do her honor; in reading, in corresponding with her nephew, her brother's widow, and her friends; in visiting and being visited by the local nobility and royalty. She was also a constant visitor at the theater and public concerts. All her physical and social wants were abundantly met. Yet the old lady was not really happy. A vein of restlessness and dissatisfaction with life runs like a darksome thread through her correspondence. She was often ill, a result no doubt of her former labors

at night, in cold and wet—sometimes, it is said, when the cold was so intense as to freeze the ink with which she was writing. These illnesses became more frequent as she neared her end, which was not reached until she had attained the venerable age of ninety-eight. She suffered but little in her last illness, and "went to sleep at last with scarcely a struggle." Her nephew, who saw her die, wrote:

"I felt almost a sense of joyful relief at the death of my aunt, in the thought that now the unquiet heart was at rest. . . . She lived altogether in the past; and she found the present not only strange but annoying."

Why was Miss Herschel's heart "*unquiet?*" Why did she find life "*annoying?*" Why did she live "altogether in the past?" To these questions there can be but one answer. She lacked the chief joy of life—the faith by which the soul lives in fellowship with God. She was eminently virtuous; her pursuits were elevating, and followed with unexcelled industry; she was endowed with rare gifts; her sister-love was pure and beautiful. But there is no sign in all her Recollections, journals, or correspondence, that she knew aught of religion beyond its theories and forms. Had she to her excellencies of mind, and to the sisterly affection of her gifted

soul, which always yearned for love, added the love of Christ, she would for her inquietude have had rest; her annoyances would have left her spirit unruffled; and, instead of living in the past, she would have lived in joyful anticipation of a blissful future. She did well in loving her brother. She would have done better had she loved him with a love less idolatrous, and concentrated her affections in Him who is infinitely better than the best of human brothers. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," is a command which, had she obeyed it, would have calmed and sweetened her troubled life.

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